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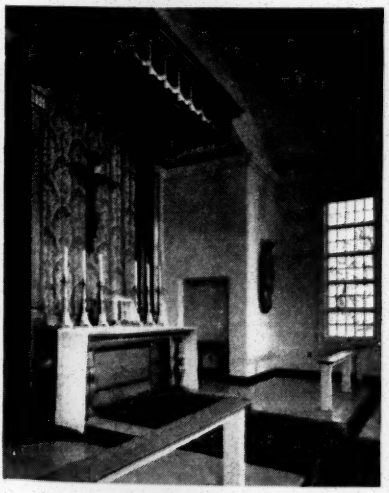

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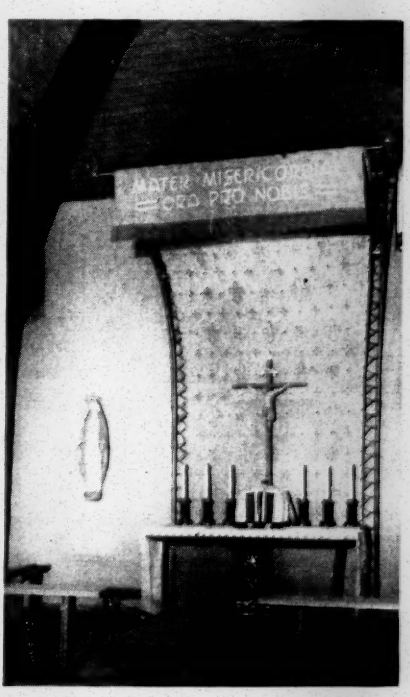

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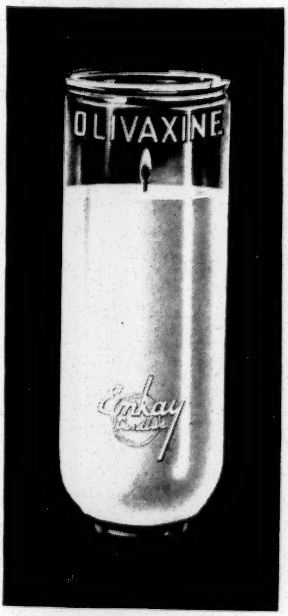

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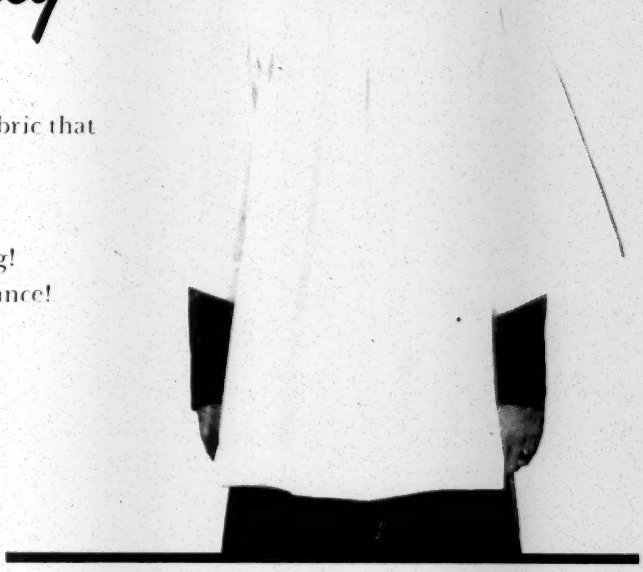

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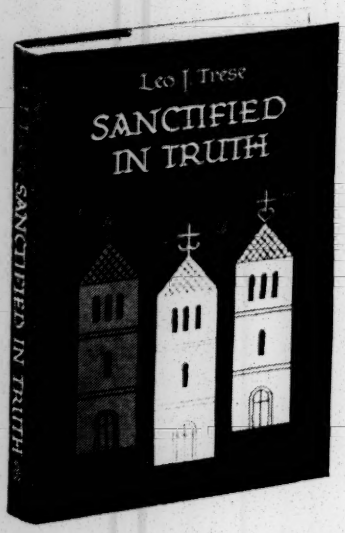

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A LETTER FROM ARCHBISHOP VAGNOZZI

Apostolic Delegation
Washington, D.C.
September 15, 1961

Mr. Thomas P. McTighe,
3121 South Street, N.W.,
Washington 7, D.C.

Dear Mr. McTighe:

The letter which you and your associates have sent to the press concerning my address at Marquette University has come, I know, from hearts sincerely devoted to the good of Holy Mother Church. You feel, perhaps, that such devotion has not been properly understood or appreciated. Although I do not remember having met any of those who signed the letter, I have the highest regard for all of them, because of the responsible positions they occupy. Your letter, however, prompts me, in the discharge of my pastoral office, to call to your attention conditions which must be fulfilled if true service is to be rendered to the Church.

At the outset, I call your attention to the fact that, while your letter to the press was dated July 7, 1961, it was under the date of July 11th that you sent me a copy with an accompanying letter in which you invited me to offer "any comments you might wish to make on it." Would you not agree, Mr. Tighe, that since the person involved is the representative of the Holy Father in this country, it would have been more proper to convey to me, either orally or in writing, the difficulties and doubts which my address occasioned in your mind, rather than to sponsor a public criticism which has provoked a rather resentful response in some Catholic weeklies?

My recent address was given after conversations with the highest authorities in Rome and with a large number of American bishops. This is to highlight the fact that the Church has a right to expect her children—particularly those who are more highly educated—to appreciate that a public appraisal of any segment of Catholic life is not something lightly indulged in by those in authority. The individual must not think that those in authority have acted with

precipitation simply because he himself has not been consulted. In recent weeks the large amount of mail I have received from every segment of Catholic opinion and particularly from members of the hierarchy indicates, among other things, that the thoughts which I expressed at Marquette were a necessary caution to those who allow themselves to be overcome by the glamour of that which is new and by the allurement of that which is calculated to startle rather than to enlighten.

I frankly cannot understand how prominent persons of your intellectual caliber could suggest that my words might "leave the impression that the generality of Catholic intellectuals in the U. S. are acting in a seriously imprudent way and that they are of set purpose compromising traditional Catholic positions." This was far from both my intention and the plain meaning of my words; and I reject your suggestion emphatically. Again, I did not say, nor did I imply, that ill will motivates those Catholics "who are trying to build a bridge between Catholic teaching and the truth that is within secular thought." I was referring to a rather small but vocal group of Catholic intellectuals whose intentions may be good, but who do not sufficiently respect Catholic tradition and Catholic authority and who are, as a result, a cause of great concern to a very large number of bishops, priests, and lay people.

We members of the hierarchy deeply appreciate the invaluable help and assistance of our intelligent Catholic laity. We even welcome their criticism. Criticism, however, should be directed toward the true meaning of a statement, and not toward some absurdity to which the statement has been forcibly reduced. Moreover, those who are openly critical of the practices and the policies of the Church—and therefore of the hierarchy that is responsible for them —should not be intolerant and resentful of adverse criticism.

The layman has his proper place in the Church. He has his proper good to contribute to the life of Christ's Mystical Body, and it is one of the glories of the Church in our day that it possesses a vigorous laity. But the layman has not been constituted as teacher of the *magisterium* nor as admonitor of the hierarchy. When, after mature deliberation, one wishes to inform those in authority of "the problems and aspirations of the people," he can do it directly, by writing or orally, rather than by sending critical letters to the press.

Only the Holy Father and the bishops have been divinely constituted as teachers in the Church. Let the lawyer talk of law, and the college rector of education; but let the *magisterium* of the Church speak with authority about matters of religion. Let the directives of the *magisterium* be accepted in a spirit of filial devotion, mindful of the Lord's words: "He who hears you, hears me" (*Luke* 10:16). It should be remembered that authority cannot always explain fully the reasons for its actions and its policies. Indeed, were authority to undertake to justify its every action, it would cease to exist.

You will admit, I am sure, that my office gives me extensive contacts with the members of the hierarchy and with large sections of the clergy and of the Catholic laity. The Apostolic Delegate is in a special position to evaluate the current of facts and thoughts that affect the life of the Church in this country. This is an advantage which cannot be easily possessed by scholars identified with a specialized branch of learning.

This letter is not written in a spirit of polemics—in which I have no wish to be involved. Since, however, your letter has brought this matter before the public, I feel it necessary to clarify the issue. The spirit of man cannot be coerced from without; yet there has never been greater need than there is today for souls completely and earnestly dedicated and obedient to the Church in the persons of her authentic teachers and rulers. We have not had in this country either a tradition of disregard for ecclesiastical authority or a spirit of anticlericalism. Let them not be fostered now in the name of liberty and progress. In order to advance, it is not necessary to bring disorder into the household of the faith.

✠ Egidio Vagnozzi

Archbishop of Myra
Apostolic Delegate to the United States

REFLECTIONS ON THE CURRENT ECUMENICISM

The unity of Christ's Church—Holy, Roman, Catholic and Apostolic—has never been in question and admits of neither denial nor doubt. For this reason, we may not properly speak of the "re-union of the Church"; for this reason, too, appeals for prayers for "Church unity," as these were made prior to the more exact emphasis on the "Chair of Unity" Octave, never rang quite true, either theologically or historically. The Church of Christ could never be other than one; however diminished by heresy geographically or wounded by schism historically, the Church always remained one.

Quite different is the situation of Christendom, the loose-knit community of those who, even though divided by heresy or schism, retain the name of Christian and continue to claim Christ as their Lord and Redeemer. The unhappy fact is that both schism and heresy, albeit leaving the unity of the Catholic Church intact, placed millions outside that unity because outside the Church. In varying degrees and formalities, many, perhaps most of these millions, remained subjectively and by intent committed to Christ. Even when they rejected the name of Catholic, they retained and wished to retain the name of Christian. Formal apostasy placed them (or inherited material heresy found them) outside the unity of the Church; it does not necessarily follow that they lost all claim to the name of Christian or must be numbered outside Christendom. But it does follow that the unity of Christendom—a historical, partly political, partly cultural by-product of the influence of the Church on civilization—was shattered by heresy and schism, even though the Church, numerically depleted by defections from its unity, remained one.

Accordingly, although we may not properly speak of the need for the re-union of the Church, we may and must speak of the need and desire for the re-union of Christendom, a re-union which, while not necessarily involving immediately dogmatic re-union with the Church, must logically and eventually presuppose the return of all who bear the name of Christian to that unity which is the sometimes obscured but always essential mark of the Church

of which Christ is the invisible head and Peter, Christ's Vicar, is indisputably the visible shepherd.

When we speak of ecumenicism and the emphasis on re-union current in our day, theological exactness and historical fact require that we think, therefore, in terms of the relationship of ecumenicism to the re-union of Christendom, not of any "re-union" of the Church. But there are good grounds to believe that the new ecumenical spirit and the increased union of Christians which it may inspire will, in God's providence, restore all Christian peoples to the ancient, unchanged and unchanging unity of Christ's Church, Catholic in the extent of its saving influence, Roman in the visible source of its not less salutary unity. Hence all who love Christ, and especially those who love His Church, must welcome the Ecumenical Movement in modern Protestantism, the increased ecumenical insights of so many contemporary spokesmen for Orthodoxy, and the intensified ecumenical spirit with which Catholics, even though always within the unity of the Church, are presently working and praying with increased fervor for the embrace within the same unity of millions whom some of us, not less than they, may once have looked upon as forever "outside"; *nosmetipsi et isti.*

Such ecumenicism affords many grounds for hope; it encounters, at the same time, many and real problems. To the sanguine the grounds for hope seem based on the very direction and built-in logic of our times. The manner in which communications, political necessity, cultural and scientific development, even mere commerce have contributed to unifying natural society seems almost to predispose sensitive men to appreciate afresh that deeper unity in which, as St. Paul reminds us, God made men from the beginning, that they might dwell together on the face of the earth. The human unity so widely sought and somewhat achieved in an age that speaks of "One World" appears to demand, as if by an implanted exigency of nature, that supernatural unity of a people made One Body by One Bread, constituted members of One Lord in One Faith and by One Baptism, of which Paul also speaks and of which the Church is at once the means and the fulfilment.

But parallels or analogies between the sources which make for the temporal unity of the City of Man and those which make for the eternal unity of the City of God can be illusory and mis-

leading; the dynamic toward unity on the natural level of human society may well dispose men dimly to discern and eventually, please God, to welcome the supernatural unity which is peculiar and proper to the Church of Christ and which comes from Christ alone; but the principles and sources of these two unities, the unity of the City of Man and the unity of the City of God, even when analogous or parallel, are quite unlike. The desire for the unity of the City of Man may dispose men to recognize and welcome the unity of the City of God; the unity of the City of God indubitably should enable men to achieve the more easily the unity of the City of Man. But these unities are not to be confounded and should not be confused. There is no escaping the wisdom behind the warning of Bishop D'Herbigny: ". . . the true way of restoring vitality to Christendom lies in obeying Christ and realizing His desire *that they may be one as We are one.* No form of union in which politics played a part as great or greater than the faith would be pleasing either to Christ or His Father or to believing souls."[1]

HOPEFUL SIGNS

It is for this reason that we must ground our hopes for the re-union of Christendom and the consequent restoration of all Christians to the unity of the Church not on any superficial tokens or trends of a social and political kind, but on the evidences of the hidden providence of God and the operation of His grace which even these may sometimes reveal. It is not the human need and desire of men for the social unity in which lies temporal security, but chiefly the divine will by which Christ seeks that all may be one, as He and the Father are one, that must be the ultimate ground of valid Ecumenicism and our hopes for its vitality.

Nonetheless, sometimes the accomplishment of the will of Christ and the designs of God's providence are reflected, however dimly, in events of the temporal, including the political order. One thinks of the recent rise of a "Catholic" movement in Scandinavian Protestantism as an example, one of many, of the manner in which historical and superficially human considerations may be the means and instruments of divine, supernatural directions. One wonders

[1] D'Herbigny, *East and West in the Unity of Christ* (London: Catholic Truth Society, no date).

to what extent the political tragedies and historical developments in Europe during recent decades have contributed to the accomplishment of seemingly unrelated, indeed superficially contradicted, divine purposes. For three full centuries Lutheranism in Northern Europe had undoubtedly been under the dominance of the German Lutheran traditions. German scholarship, German thoroughness, German genius for organization had caused the Lutheranism of Germany to cast a long and powerful shadow over other areas of the Lutheran world. Then came Hitler and in the very stratagem by which he sought to intensify German influence on every level, he took steps which may well have broken the spell of German Lutheranism over the church groups in the Scandinavian countries. He cut off German communication with the outside world on the level of culture and education, on the level of science, commerce and industry. Now on the level of religion, Lutheranism, already wounded by nationalism as a result of Luther's original spirit and tactic, became divided within itself, thanks to the ultra-nationalism of German National Socialism.

For the first time in generations Lutherans of Scandinavia found themselves more "on their own," thrown back on the spiritual traditions of their own nations for sustenance and inspiration. The effect on the collective Lutheran community in Scandinavia may have paralleled in some degree the spiritual awakening of sensitive individual Scandinavian souls like Sigrid Undset and Johannes Joergensen who, by personal rediscovery of the authentic Scandinavian spiritual tradition, had come to know the pre-Reformation saints and that universal Catholic Church of the days before the insurgence of divisive nationalism among Christians. It became, perhaps, a little more clear how the great evil of National Socialism was in many ways the logical outgrowth of the ultra-nationalistic principle, a principle never more vicious than when applied to religion as it indubitably had been in the spread of Northern European Protestantism; *cuius regio, illius religio.* Catholicism had talked of but one Church: the Church *in* Italy, the Church *in* France, the Church *in* England, the Church *in* the United States, the Church *in* China. But Protestantism had talked of the churches, and had done so in terms which not merely declared the *fact* of nationalism but implied the canonization of that fact. Protestants spoke of the Church *of* England, the Church

of Sweden, the Dutch Reformed Church *of* Holland, the Church *of* Scotland, the Church *of* Ireland, the Protestant Episcopalian Church *of* America.

The rediscovery of Christendom, of a unity antecedent to the bitter political divisions of modern Europe and vaguely, at least, surviving in the highest social ideals of dismembered Europe, brought with it a reawakening to ancient *Catholic* values which had given birth and unity to Christendom. This reawakening sharpened the nostalgia for unity which has always haunted spiritual Protestants and which explains, no doubt, the earnest and persevering devotion of so many European Protestants to ecumenical movements and to dreams of "world faith and order" which now stir American Protestant imaginations.

It is a full century that Anglicanism has been seeking Christian Unity down different paths and under varied formulae. Their desire for such unity was solemnly proclaimed at the Lambeth Conference; the weekly news reviews and daily papers now record the development and direction of that desire, not only within Anglicanism itself but increasingly among Protestant groups only recently but already profoundly influenced by the nostalgia for unity. Not unlike have been the developments among the Orthodox, who, sometimes with lingering anti-papal feelings but not less often with truly admirable courage, given their cruel political situation, have publicly prayed that through unity all Christians in the world may the better free the world from atheism and the spirit of Anti-Christ. From the Phanar, Joachim III, whom Bishop D'Herbigny called the greatest Orthodox patriarch in the last three centuries, first insisted to the Eastern Orthodox bishops that the time had come for Christians to turn their thoughts in the direction of a return to unity.

PAPAL CONCERN

Meanwhile, the successors of St. Peter, speaking from that apostolic chair once the focal point of a united Christendom as well as of the one Church, have borne passionate, persistent witness to the need for the re-union of Christendom within the unity of the Church, exhorting those outside the Church to reflect on the dogmatic faith which must be the basis of unity and those inside the Church to school themselves in the moral virtues which must make manifest and attractive the unity of Christ's Church. Pope

Leo XIII addressed himself directly and eloquently to the Orthodox *(Praeclara orientalium dignitas)* and to the Anglicans in his *Amantissimae voluntatis,* with its moving prayer for England. Pope St. Pius X urged Catholics to pray for the re-union of Christians by reciting certain verses by St. Metrophanes, and he implored priests, religious and individual faithful to sue in all their prayers, especially their masses and communions, the mercy of God to the end that any and all dissenting from the Church might be fully restored to the unity of faith. Pope Benedict XV, praying and working for whatever might influence Christians in the direction of unity, pointedly expressed the hope that those already included in Catholic unity might be saved from all *tactlessness* that might estrange other Christians further from that unity. He prayed: "May the Spirit of concord and charity, the sign of Thy presence among the faithful, hasten the day when our prayers and theirs (i.e., the separated Christians of the East) may be united, that all peoples and all tongues may confess Our Lord Jesus Christ. . . ."

Pope Pius XI, even though bound to reject with apostolic authority the false dogmatic assumptions behind non-Catholic efforts toward unity in Faith and Order, paid tribute to the religious and moral ideals which inspired even these efforts at the re-union of Christians. Pope Pius XII never lost an opportunity to speak the conciliating word or to praise generous impulses toward reunion, even though he, too, repeatedly pointed out how the Catholic Church, conscious of her own identity, must of necessity reject any tendency to equate "the churches" with "the Church" or to rest content with the incomplete idea of Christianity that makes it a matter of accepting certain "fundamental" least common denominators, while neglecting some of the integral truths expressly or implicitly included in that apostolic deposit of faith of which the Church is at once the custodian, the herald and the expression. But the charity with which Pope Pius XII pleaded the case for the Church of Christ was not less than the clarity with which he exposed the errors by which the identity of the Church was obscured. The ecumenical spirit of Pope John is exemplified in daily deeds, gestures and pronouncements, from spontaneous declarations to visiting Jews ("I am your brother, Joseph"), to the soul behind the letter of his solemn proclamation of the Ecumenical Council and the carefully considered wording of his historic encyclical *Mater et magistra.*

In all this an inevitable difference necessarily reveals itself between the premises of the *ecumenical movement* among non-Catholic Christians and the premises of the *ecumenical spirit* among Catholics. Non-Catholic efforts at the re-union of Christians invariably start from the assumption that the Catholic Church is not the One True Church and that thus the union of Christian churches must be sought not in but *beyond* any existing Church, in some "Coming Great Church" toward the realization of which the ecumenical movement presses forward. On the other hand, the Catholic Church, as Karl Adam points out, precisely because of what she knows herself to be, must antecedently eschew any movements or theories of re-union along such lines and even forbid Catholics to take any public or private part in them.

But this does not mean that the Catholic Church is indifferent to the world-wide desire for re-union among Christians or that individual Catholics are without a part to play in the fostering of the climate favorable to such re-union. The *ecumenical movement* corresponds to a need among Protestants if Christ's prayer is to be fully answered; an ever more warm and dynamic *ecumenical spirit* corresponds to a need among Catholics. Karl Adam states it well when he says: "For the Catholic, in contrast to the Protestant conscience which is not in union with Rome, the immediate object of all efforts at re-union can only be that each according to his powers should help to remove the obstacles which are keeping those who do not believe in her from the Mother Church."[2]

The obligation which the ecumenical spirit imposes on the Catholic to remove the obstacles in himself which may keep his non-Catholic brethren from the unity of the Church involves no reflection on the Church, though it may on him and on his brethren, the individual children of the Church, past and present, to the extent that he and they may have obscured the beauty as well as the unity of Catholicism. To confess the individual and collective guilt of Catholics in no way compromises the stainless sanctity of the Church; that sanctity transcends our power to blot the spiritual beauty of the Church, just as the unity of the Church eludes our power to wound it by our personal limitations or petty factions. Catholicism never was and is not now a denomination or a sect among the many in Christendom; but many

[2] Karl Adam, *One and Holy* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1951), p. 97.

Catholics, alas, early acquired the denominational spirit and a sectarian mentality.

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

And so, Karl Adam speaks accurately and appositely when he points out that the moral obstacles to the return of the unity of the Church are the responsibility of individual Catholics quite as much as they are the burden of non-Catholics. Pope Adrian VI made no secret of this when, with disarming humility and completely Catholic candor, he made public confession through his legate before the Nuremberg Reichstag January 3, 1523: "We freely acknowledge that God has allowed this chastisement to come upon His Church because of the sins of men and especially because of the sins of priests and prelates. . . . We know well that for many years much that must be regarded with horror has come to pass in this Holy See: abuses in spiritual matters, transgressions against the Commandments; indeed, that everything has been gravely perverted." And therefore he authorized his legate to promise that "we will take all pains to reform, in the first place, the court of Rome, from which perhaps all these evils take their origin."

In acknowledging the universal duty of common penance and expiation, Pope Adrian was urged by the desire to see the re-union of Christendom and the restoration to the unity of Catholicism of those in revolt against the Holy Roman Church. He exemplified that ecumenical spirit that is required of Catholics and that cannot be indifferent to any ecumenical movement outside the Catholic fold. Motives of love for the souls of those involved in such movements will prompt the ecumenical spirit, but so will motives of love for the Church herself.

It is true that the Church did not lose her unity, nor any of her other essential marks, when she lost those who defected from her; but she and we lost much, nonetheless, when she lost children so long and so rightly cherished. Her mark of Catholicism was not forfeited; it could not be. But the world-wide splendor of that Catholicism was dimmed. The ecumenical spirit in Catholics will prompt them passionately to desire that the *intensive* Catholicity of the Church is always and everywhere more perfectly realized *extensively*.

The ecumenical spirit will make Catholics restless until the external, geographical Catholicity of the Church conforms as closely

as God wills and as our efforts can attain to the internal Catholicism by which the Church possesses that all-embracing universality echoed in St. Augustine's description of her: *In omnibus linguis sum. Mea est Graeca, mea est Syra, mea est Hebraea, mea est omnium gentium.*

The ecumenical spirit will also prompt Catholics to consider, prayerfully and humbly, contemporary criticisms not of Catholicism, perhaps, but certainly of Catholics, in order to discover wherein we may offend, even if necessarily but certainly when unnecessarily. The ecumenical spirit will require of us that we be on guard lest we be guilty of the grave moral and spiritual defects of the Elder Son who remained faithful, the while we decry the grief caused the Father by the Prodigal.[3] Nothing has warmed hearts more than the manner in which Pope John has exemplified the spirit of the Father in the parable, impatiently rushing forth to meet the returning son and sometimes bewildering by his zeal the complacency of the "other brother"! He has focused our attention again on the entire parable and has forced us to meditate on the spiritual sins of which the Elder Son became guilty. The ecumenical spirit of Catholics, as they contemplate the ecumenical movement among Protestants, should help preserve them from the spiritual pride of the son who remained safe in the unity of home.[4]

DOCTRINAL PROBLEMS

The current ecumenicism raises doctrinal problems for Catholics. These will center around the necessity of keeping the ancient faith uncompromised by the equivocation and undiluted by the false irenicism which might counterfeit a true ecumenical spirit. The mood of our moment in history could easily mistake the spirit of

[3] Cf. *Luke*, 15: 11-32.

[4] The authentic Catholic attitude toward the ecumenical movement and toward "those who, although baptized, are separated from the Apostolic See" is set forth with theological care and pastoral pleading by Augustin Cardinal Bea, S.J., in an article on Catholic Ecumenicism published Jan. 14, 1961, in the fortnightly magazine, *Civilta Cattolica*. Cardinal Bea is chairman of the Vatican Council's Secretariate for Promoting Christian Unity. An English translation of his article was distributed by the NCWC News Service under date of April 27, 1961. The translation is also available in *Guide*, no. 160 (Paulist Institute for Religious Research, New York), under the title "Problems and Ways to Unity."

glib compromise for that of Christian conciliation. The impulses of the generous heart can, in this as in all things else, lead to the confusion of doctrinal concepts which charity itself, as well as truth, requires that we keep clear. Indeed, the very desire to see all Christians members of the Church may, in its ardor, engender a confusion as to what is membership in the Church or even as to what is the Church.

One fears that it was just such praiseworthy generosity of heart but unfortunate confusion of doctrine which prompted some Catholic theologians, imbued with a certain ecumenical spirit, to write or speak ineptly and even misleadingly of the unity in "the invisible soul of the Church" of Christians who, however good, are not, in fact, members of the visible Body of the Church. The late Pope Pius XII felt bound three times at least in his pontificate solemnly to treat of this dangerous confusion of doctrine; in so doing, he was moved by his truly ecumenical spirit quite as much as by his responsibilities as the guardian and interpreter of ecumenical truth.[5]

Then there are the problems of how and when the predestined return to the unity of the Church will be accomplished. Some there are who see the possibility of occasional, at least, major instances

[5] The Editor of this *Review*, Monsignor Joseph C. Fenton, has included a detailed commentary on and analysis of these three pertinent pronouncements (the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*, the Holy Office Letter *Suprema haec sacra*, and the Encyclical *Humani generis*) in his book *The Catholic Church and Salvation* (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1958). Monsignor Fenton has made a major contribution to the "theological dialogue" on the problem of who are "within" the unity of the Church and who are not, by his review and analysis of official pronouncements of the Holy See from the Fourth Council of the Lateran through the pontificate of Pope Pius XII. The central problem to which he addresses himself is that of the necessity of the Church to individual salvation, but the pitfalls surrounding the concept on membership in the Church are bluntly exposed both in his commentary on the pronouncements by the Holy See (see especially pages 98-99 for the distinction between being "within" the Church and being actually a member of the Church) and in his trenchant treatment of modern misconceptions concerning "the soul of the Church." Especially effective is Monsignor Fenton's demonstration of the manner in which St. Robert Bellarmine's doctrine concerning "the soul of the Church" became distorted by intemperate zeal or inadequate insight to defend the very contradictories to Bellarmine's basic teaching! In the extensive bibliography needed for informed reflection on current

of corporate re-union of some groups with the Church.[6] Most, however, will probably agree with Karl Adam that there can be no expectation of widespread corporate re-union in the near future. The way of return will probably continue to be the lonely way of individuals who rise above the history by which men tend to be imprisoned and, thus eluding the confines of social controls, seek and find their personal way to God's will for His people.

The difficulty is that sad history, as well as heretical doctrine, perpetuates the divisions of Christendom and keeps millions out of the unity of the Church. Individual souls are caught up in the history of the groups to which they belong by reason of blood, politics, cultural and class considerations; it is no longer a matter of theological dogma and moral teaching alone. Denominations and sects are corporations, communities, collective entities; they have become subject to historical patterns and sociological laws, as well as religious traditions. Common experiences, common history, common institutions not only unite but, in a sense, imprison their members. They have become sociological phenomena almost as much as, sometimes even more than, theological movements.

Karl Adam is probably right when he argues that from the purely human point of view one must fear that the denominations will never by their own free decision and in accordance with any radical change in their own inner attitudes "break their shells and set their followers free." This could only happen involuntarily, as, for example, under the force of some external event which shattered the corporate hold of the historical group on the individuals within

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ecumenicism, Monsignor Fenton's summary and study of papal pronouncements has an obvious and important place. His clarification of the position of devout non-Catholic Christians with relation to the Church antedates but conforms with that set forth by Cardinal Bea in the *Civilta Cattolica* article cited above.

[6] Father Francis Clark, S.J., Lecturer in Dogmatic Theology, Heythrop College, England, persuasively but perhaps sanguinely makes an appealing case for the possible reconciliation with Rome of certain "High Anglican" bodies, including dioceses, particularly in Africa and away from the more Protestant and anti-papal influences of history closer to home in England. Father Clark's paper on *Anglicanism* at the Maynooth Union Summer School, 1961, will be published shortly by Maynooth. Not less attractive was his other paper at the same Summer School, on *The Mass, Grace, and Christian Unity.*

it. At least, this appears true from the purely human point of view.

GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

But Adam is equally right when he reminds us that the purely human and historical point of view knows little or nothing of the thought and plan of God. Who has known the mind of the Lord? Perhaps God will bring to pass His will through some sorrowful mystery; perhaps only in the catacombs again, in a time of terror and in the shadow of the eclipse of Christendom, will those now estranged be able to recognize one another as brethren and thus, in mutual forbearance, be reconciled within the unity of the One Fold of that Peter who saw his brethren scattered in the earliest persecutions. Perhaps God will bring to pass His will through some joyful or glorious mystery; He may send us a saint of charity so compelling and wisdom so cogent as to attract the most hostile hearts and convert the most indifferent minds. We do not know what is in the divine plan of salvation; we can only note the new ecumenical movement outside the Church and sense the refreshed ecumenical spirit within the Church, the spirit shining in Pope John and spreading by happy contagion among Catholics almost everywhere. We can note these, pray for their prosperity and co-operate with the relevant graces God pours out in connection with them.

And even then, what assurance can we have that Christendom will be re-established in anything like the splendor of which the devout dream and that the unity of the Church will shine forth in history with anything like the glory God's work necessarily contains? One can only guess, not predict, and the guess will be conditioned as much by temperament, perhaps, as by theological indications. It may be that the accomplishment of God's will and the fulfilment of our prayers will be deferred until the end of the world; it may be that even then it will not seem, by puny human standards, so great a victory. *The Son of Man, when He comes, will He find, think you, faith on earth?*[7]

Bishop D'Herbigny recalls how Vladimir Soloviev, the Russian thinker, foretold that the Great Return would happen and how seemingly pathetic yet powerfully triumphant the final scene would

[7] *Luke*, 18: 8.

be. Soloviev imagined the unity of the Church on earth to be vindicated in the presence of Anti-Christ and the "Imperial Council of Apostates." The Pope, Peter II, confronted with the crowd of renegades celebrating the apotheosis of human nature separated from the Divine nature, remains, of course, faithful to Jesus Christ. A little circle of monks and laymen surround him still and chant in the face of the Anti-Christ the divine promise of Christ: *Non praevalebunt!* Two other groups—very small ones—join in the protest against the pagan humanism of Anti-Christ. The Metropolitan John, who represents the Orthodox, and the Professor Paulus, who stands for believing Protestants, draw near to Pope Peter. Together they confess Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Incarnate Word, Who died and rose again for the salvation of the world. Unity, at least of these few, is to be realized. The Metropolitan John cries, "My Sons, the time has come in which we shall fulfil the supreme prayer of Christ for His disciples: *Ut sint unum!* May our brother Peter shepherd us, the last sheep of the Lord." The representatives of the last believing Protestants then intone in their turn the *Tu es Petrus*. Suddenly a light shines . . . a great sign appears in the heavens: a woman clothed in the sun. "Behold our 'Labarum,'" cries the Pope, "let us march towards it." And he follows the Immaculate Virgin, leading after him the newly reconciled flock of true Christians.

Will the consummation of the ecumenical hopes of Christians[8] be thus seemingly limited and melancholy? Will it be a manifest historical triumph for the Church here below; will it, rather, seem more like a defeat so far as the historical order is concerned? Who can tell? And, in the final analysis, what difference does it make, since the victory or defeat can only be in terms of Christ, Whose Body the Church is and for Whom all defeat is swallowed up in predestined victory?

✠ JOHN WRIGHT

Bishop of Pittsburgh

[8] D'Herbigny, *op. cit.*, pp. 31 f.

FAITH AND REASON IN THE TEACHING OF KIERKEGAARD

In the current discussions concerning the true meaning of faith, there is no point more central than the nature of religious assent. Moreover, using the distinction between faith understood as the truths we accept—*fides quae creditur*—and faith as an act of believing—*fides qua creditur*—it is most apparent that the principal concern today is with the act of believing itself. Among Catholic theologians an ever-increasing number of men have reaffirmed and established more solidly the general Thomistic position that the grace of faith also exercises a psychological and not merely an entitative influence on the believer.[1] At the same time, they have also emphasized the role of reason in the approach of faith, even though they contend that the motives of credibility do not enter into the act of faith itself; yet faith remains reasonable—an act doing no violence to human nature—because of this preliminary judgment of reason which continues to exercise its influence throughout the entire life of faith.

Non-Catholic theologians have also been concerned with this question, urged on chiefly by the existentialist approach of the day, coupled with a marked sense of disillusionment with the attempt to use the certitude of historical proof as a basis for faith. And as H. F. Lovell Cocks remarks: "Sooner or later, the serious student of modern theology is driven back on Kierkegaard. Behind Barth,

[1] Cf. Roger Aubert, *Le problème de l'acte de foi* (Louvain, 1954); *Idem,* "Questioni attuali intorno all'atto di Fede," in *Questioni e orientamenti di teologia dommatica* (Milan, 1957), I, 655-708; M.-L. Guérard des Lauriers, O.P., *Dimensions de la foi* (Paris, 1952); Henri Vignon, S.J., *De virtutibus et donis vitae supernaturalis* (Romae: Universitas Gregoriana, 1948); Juan Alfaro, S.J., *Adnotationes in tractatum de virtutibus* (Romae: Universitas Gregoriana, 1956); Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *De virtutibus theologicis* (Romae: Institutum Angelicum de Urbe, 1948); *Idem, De revelatione per ecclesiam catholicam proposita* (Romae: Institutum Angelicum de Urbe, 1950); G. de Broglie, *Pour une théorie rationnelle de l'acte de foi* (Paris: Institut catholique, 1955); Josef Trütsch, "Glaube," in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche,* ed. 2 (Freiburg: Herder, 1960), IV, 922; *Idem,* "Glaube und Erkenntnis," in Feiner, Trütsch, Böckle, *Fragen der Theologie Heute* (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1957), pp. 45-68; Joseph Falcon, S.M., *La crédibilité du dogme catholique* (Paris: Emmanuel Vitte, 1952).

Brunner and Heim; behind Buber, Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel and the existentialist philosophers, stands the strange figure of this universal genius."[2]

It is not so much that Kierkegaard (1813-1855) solved the question of faith, nor that he introduced an entirely new notion into the discussion. It is rather that his position continues to serve as a good point of reference for the various solutions offered to this perplexing question. Kierkegaard's doctrine is neither that of the pure rationalist or historicist, nor that of those who admit a close relationship between faith and a visible church; he attempts to settle on something inbetween these two approaches. In this regard, his teaching reflects the middle-of-the-road attitude adopted in his personal life. Kierkegaard rebelled against the rationalistic Protestantism of the nineteenth century no less than he did against the ecclesiastical pretensions of the Established Church in Denmark. He was Lutheran in his inspiration, and yet far from Luther in many of his most basic positions.[3] He extolled faith over the claims of reason, and yet he committed himself to certain other positions which have led some of his critics to refer to him as "a Hegelian in spite of himself, the victim of a reason which was madly ambitious, an impenitent rationalist even in his defence of the 'moment of the absurd' " which he calls faith.[4]

Kierkegaard must be viewed above all in that historical context which formed and fashioned him. It is particularly important for Catholics to realize this, since it has become increasingly fashionable to read his diatribes against rational systems of philosophy as though they were primarily directed against Thomistic philosophy, and that Kierkegaard therefore "has a message for us" in understanding the true meaning of the act of faith.

In point of fact, nothing could be further from the truth. The Thomist himself can be nothing less than astounded when a non-Catholic theologian describes the philosophy of Aquinas and that

[2] H. F. Lovell Cocks, "Foreword" to H. V. Martin, *The Wings of Faith* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1950), p. 5.

[3] Cf. James Collins, *The Mind of Kierkegaard* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953), pp. 214-220; Regis Jolivet, *Introduction to Kierkegaard*, trans. by W. H. Barber (London: Frederick Muller, 1950), pp. 30-42, 206-218; H. V. Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-84.

[4] Jolivet, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

of Hegel as two species of a single approach associated with the general principle that faith is co-ordinate with reason. Thus it is contended by H. V. Martin that, despite radical differences, Aquinas and Hegel both held that religious faith is ultimately rooted in human reason:

> Historically, there are two main forms of this theory, which, though differing radically the one from the other, show their root affinity in their common tendency to relate religion intimately with philosophy, and thus ultimately to be rationalistic.[5]

BISHOP BUTLER

Possibly one of the best examples of the reduction of the assent of faith to a rational conclusion based on historical and philosophical premises is the teaching proposed by the Anglican Bishop Joseph Butler (1692-1752). Butler attempted to meet the deists of the eighteenth century on their own grounds, and "prove" the truth of Christianity on a purely rational and historical basis. Cardinal Newman himself was greatly influenced by Butler in his earlier life, but his reaction against the pure rationalism of Butler's approach accounts in large measure for his later notion of the assent of faith, in which he approached the Thomistic position but, for lack of contact with Scholastic thought in general, expressed it in quite different terminology.[6]

Butler held in his chief work, *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature,* that Christianity is believed as true because of the "evidence" given in testimony of it; chief among the various types of evidence were miracles and prophecies. For Butler, these constitute "the historical evidence for the truth of Christianity."[7] The assent of faith, therefore, was a rational conclusion based upon an historical study of the evidence, guided by the principles of reason throughout. Hence, as Mossner points out, ". . . Butler voiced the dominant religion of the intellect. . .," and for him ". . . faith meant intel-

[5] Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[6] Cf. John Aloysius Elbert, *Newman's Conception of Faith Prior to 1845* (Dayton, Ohio: 1933); J. Robinson, "Newman's Use of Butler's Arguments," in *The Downside Review*, 76 (1958), 161-180.

[7] Joseph Butler, *The Analogy of Religion*, II, 7, 6 (in Gladstone edition [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896] I, 307).

lectual conviction. . . ."[8] Since such an historical proof could not give metaphysical certitude, Butler was also forced to accept his other chief principle: "Probability is the very guide of life."[9] This meant ultimately that faith, in Butler's system, rests "on a mass of probabilities"—a doctrine which, by a complicated course, found its way into the teaching of the Modernists and was condemned in the *Lamentabili* issued by the Holy Office in 1907.[10]

The teaching of Bishop Butler thus was also concerned with the problem of the relationship between faith and reason, but the difficulty was solved by reducing faith to reason. Kierkegaard, on the other hand, attempted to solve the problem by eliminating the role of reason entirely. The position of this Danish theologian began to formulate itself in his strong rebellion against the rationalistic absolutism of Hegel which had become so deeply rooted in the theological mind of his day. Hegel had identified everything with reason; in his system of pantheism—or better, theopanism—Absolute Reason unfolded itself in the world and found its earthly expression in the reasoned faith of man.

Reacting against this deification of reason and the consequent reduction of faith to rational assent, Kierkegaard came to speak of faith as a far more personal and subjective act, entirely distinct from (and for Kierkegaard, even contrary to) human reason. It was this which ultimately led the Danish philosopher-theologian to his doctrine of the "leap" into faith—a leap into the absurd. As Martin describes this central position of Kierkegaard's thesis: ". . . faith does not arise through intellectual understanding, but only through a decision of the will in the face of objective uncertainty."[11]

I VATICAN COUNCIL

In evaluating this basic idea of Kierkegaard it is important to examine the thought *behind* this teaching, the ultimate reason why he came to this conclusion. Basically, the doctrine of the Catholic Church teaches in a more profound and co-related fashion this same truth that Kierkegaard strove to defend. I Vatican Council

[8] Ernest Campbell Mossner, *Bishop Butler and the Age of Reason* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), p. 166.

[9] Butler, *Analogy*, I, Intro., 4 (Gladstone edition, I, 5).

[10] Cf. Denz. 2025.

[11] Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

describes the act of faith as the act of the intellect supernaturalized by an infused virtue by which "with the inspiration and help of God's grace, we believe that what He has revealed is true—not because its intrinsic truth is seen with the natural light of reason—but because of the authority of God who reveals it, of God who can neither deceive nor be deceived."[12]

At the same time, the Council was careful to point out that the act of faith involves the entire individual, centered upon the personal action of the human will as an entirely free act, co-operating with grace and involving a personal decision and a personal commitment to God the Revealer. There is no way that the act of faith can be socialized or necessitated by anything outside the individual; not by reason or historical proof, not even by divine grace. Faith must be essentially a personal and free act on the part of every single individual, responding to the internal grace offered by God.

It is important to emphasize that this free act, and this commitment, is not a purely human act. To speak of faith in this sense as the "response" of man, acting solely according to his natural powers, to the revelation of God would be pure Pelagianism; this is in no sense the teaching of the Catholic Church. In the realm of faith and salvation, God must always take the initiative; in the words of Trent, ". . . on his own free will, without God's grace, [man] could not take one step towards justice in God's sight."[13] Man can only respond to a grace freely offered by God.

The very act of faith, then, precisely as an act of a human being, transcends the unaided powers of man's nature. At the same time, this response of man is also a free act, since God's grace never necessitates the will of man. Hence I Vatican Council describes the act of faith as a "gift of God," since it results from the grace of faith, while still being an act by which ". . . man offers to God Himself a free obedience inasmuch as he concurs and co-operates with God's grace, when he could resist it."[14] For this reason, the Council solemnly condemned those who would teach that ". . . the assent of Christian faith is not free, but necessarily results from arguments of human reason."[15]

[12] Denz. 1789.
[13] Denz. 797.
[14] Denz. 1791.
[15] Denz. 1814.

Christian faith cannot be explained as an act that results necessarily from a series of arguments proportioned to human reason; it cannot be simply "taught" and "proved," but only proposed by the Christian teacher. The individual must enter into this process and, through his acceptance of God's grace, freely commit himself to the God who has revealed Himself, His truth, and His redemptive activity on behalf of mankind. This perception of the authority of God revealing will necessarily include two elements which, in our opinion, must both be supernaturally perceived through the action of grace. These two are the authority of God Himself, and the authority of the divinely-guided magisterium of God's Church upon earth which proposes the message revealed by God; these two elements constitute what Vignon refers to as the *Uncreated* and *created* testimony of God revealing, one visible and the other invisible. But together they form the supernatural testimony of the supernatural authority by which we assent to the truths revealed and thus commit ourselves entirely to God and, at present, to the Christian way of life.[16]

In 1870, I Vatican Council was concerned with questions not unlike those which were disturbing Kierkegaard at the very same time. The Council was dealing primarily with the confusion introduced by Hermes and others who desired to relate Catholic faith to the pure rationalism of the post-Kantian philosophers. The end result of their attempts was the teaching that reason became absolute and necessitating, even in the realm of faith. As Gregory XVI indicated in his earlier condemnation of Hermes, the basic principle was set forth that ". . . reason is the principal norm and the only means by which man is able to attain a knowledge of supernatural truths. . . ."[17] Ultimately, what Gregory XVI was complaining of in 1835 was not appreciably different from the complaints of Soren Kierkegaard a few years later. Hermes was following the line of thought that would make reason the sole criterion of truth, even in regard to faith—a line of thought which appeared in its most exaggerated form in the philosophical "System" of Hegel, in which God and Absolute Reason and faith all become identified.

[16] Cf. Vignon, *op. cit.*, pp. 239 ff.
[17] Denz. 1619.

KIERKEGAARD AND CATHOLICISM

Kierkegaard reacted against the very same tendencies which were being condemned so vigorously in the Catholic Church, but this failed to align him more closely with Rome. There is possibly a good deal of truth in the opinion of Haecker and others that, judging by the direction in which he was tending, Kierkegaard, had he lived, might logically have gone over to Catholicism.[18] Walter Lowrie agrees that this is a more plausible guess than the suggestion made by Georg Brandes that Kierkegaard would eventually have turned to the position of Liberal Protestantism or free thought. He indicates, moreover, that even Karl Barth admitted that the logic of Kierkegaard's thought should lead one to Rome, as it actually did in the case of some of those who read his writings.[19]

Be that as it may, it would have been in the Catholic tradition that Kierkegaard could have been able to solve the perplexing questions which continued to trouble him to his dying day. On this one central point in regard to faith, Kierkegaard was already at one with the Church of Rome, although he remained a convinced and faithful Lutheran on many other points; but he would not permit faith to rest on the conclusions of reason. Yet his complaints against the rationalism of Hegel coupled with his criticism of the Established Lutheran Church in Denmark shows that he was far from Luther on many points, and would seem to indicate

[18] Cf. Jolivet, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

[19] Cf. Walter Lowrie, in "Introduction" to Soren Kierkegaard, *Attack Upon "Christendom,"* translated by Walter Lowrie (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1956), p. xiv: "S.K.'s contemporaries, though of course this source of information was closed to them, were disposed to conjecture that, if S.K. had lived longer, he must have felt compelled to take refuge in the Church of Rome, as some of the readers of the *Instant* did. That was only a guess, but it was at least more plausible than the guess of Georg Brandes, that he would have 'leapt over' to free thought. Perhaps, if S.K. had lived to become a Catholic, he might have written another satire, dealing especially with Catholicism, and more especially with Rome. For all that, he may have been *essentially* a Catholic in his way of thinking. That is what Father Przywara makes out in *Das Geheimnis Kierkegaards,* by which he was able to convince Karl Barth that, as he put it, 'If I were to follow Kierkegaard, I might as well go over there,' pointing, as he wrote these words near his window in the Hotel Hassler on the Pincian Hill, to the Vatican on the other side of the Eternal City."

that he belonged elsewhere, even though he showed no clear indication of searching further, or perhaps of even knowing precisely in what direction to search.

As Collins notes, Kierkegaard possessed no more than a "sketchy acquaintance" with Catholic teaching.[20] Toward the end of his life, he did consider, from a speculative point of view, the system of Catholicism and contrasted it with Protestantism; it was, however, only medieval Catholicism that he studied. He saw it as an historical state in the history of Christendom which had given us some valuable historical lessons that would be of use in determining the future course of Christianity.[21] Even then, "Catholicism was not treated by him as one of the serious alternatives in our time."[22]

Unfortunately, Kierkegaard was very much like a man who stands outside the gates of a walled city, complaining of his lot in life and relating that which he seeks, not realizing that only a few steps beyond, all that he seeks can readily be found. Before the time of Kierkegaard and after, the Church of Rome has presented the act of faith as something far closer to that which he was seeking, but he failed to perceive this. In his opposition to the unrelenting rationalism of Hegel, Kierkegaard mistakenly felt that he was returning to the forthright position of the Reformation, yet as history will record, he also compromised the position of traditional Lutheranism. Eventually he assumed a position halfway between that of sixteenth century Lutheranism and the teaching of the Church of Rome.

Objectively speaking, there is a great similarity between both the complaints and the solutions of Kierkegaard and the Catholic Church in regard to faith, despite their differences. Kierkegaard has been hailed as the great defender of faith as a personal commitment and as a human act that does not result from a purely rationalistic or historical mode of argumentation. This is the basic position of Rome, although it might be admitted that Kierkegaard's literary style enabled him to express this thought in a more attractive manner.

The supposed opposition between Kierkegaard's notion of faith and that proposed by Aquinas (and the Catholic Church)—in the

[20] Cf. Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] *Ibid.*

manner suggested by H. V. Martin—can only be explained as a failure either on the part of Martin to understand the precise teaching of the Catholic Church, or (a strong possibility) the failure of Catholic writers to represent properly the official Catholic view. Hermes was not the only Catholic philosopher or theologian who bent over backwards to accommodate his belief to the position of the avant-garde thinkers of his day, thus vitiating the true Catholic position. The entire history of the Church in recent centuries seems to indicate a series of such attempts, so that Catholic thinkers in one decade must expend great effort in showing that the avant-garde view of the preceding decade was never the true view of the Church, but rather an unfortunate accommodation, on the part of certain individuals who achieved great notoriety, to the more recent and "popular" views of their time.[23]

[23] We may well ask today if the entire movement associated with "Kerygmatic Theology" did not arise out of a faulty theory of faith and a false notion of the work of so-called scientific theology associated with it. In opposing "scientific theology" to "Kerygmatic theology," the defenders of this view seem to look upon scientific theology as a stepped-up philosophical science of some sort, completely vitiating the role of theology as outlined by Pius XII in *Humani generis*. F. Lakner, e.g., in his article, "Das Zentralobjekt der Theologie," in *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, 62 (1958), pp. 1, 15, speaks of the "wissenschaftlichen Theologie" and "die streng logische und analytische Wissenschaftsmethode" used in scientific theology. Thus (p. 31) he speaks of the formal object of scientific theology as the "demonstrabilitas ex verbo Dei revelato (et magisterio Ecclesiae custodito)," and that of kerygmatic theology or "Verkündigungstheologie" as the "praedicabilitas ex verbo Dei (et missione Ecclesiae)."—At the basis of this distinction there seems to be a concept of theology as a strictly scientific labor, into whose essence the role of the magisterium does not seem to enter. Possibly it is not by accident that this "kerygmatic" approach arose, in large measure, at the University of Innsbruck, which is always associated with a theory of faith which admits the possibility of a "natural faith" or a "scientific faith," and denies any psychological effect of the grace of faith itself. (Cf. Lercher-Schlagenhaufen, *Institutiones theologiae dogmaticae*, ed. 5 [Innsbruck: Rauch, 1951], I, 396 ff.) It may well be that a different approach to the act of faith and the role of the theologian more along Thomistic lines might have eliminated the supposed—and quite unfounded—opposition between "scientific theology" and "kerygmatic theology." It is always the magisterium itself which proposes for belief the truths revealed by God, and both preachers and theologians who are not bishops share in this work only by virtue of a mandate; and in no case does it become their task in so-called "scientific theology" to attempt to "prove" or "demonstrate" the truths of revelation, or prove that the infallible magisterium has not fallen into error.

Thus in regard to the act of faith, it would seem that the current emphasis on faith as an act of reason, or the end result of an historical or philosophical proof, which has crept even into Catholic literature, is actually the unhappy result of Catholic attempts in the last two centuries to meet the deists and rationalists on their own grounds. This concern may well have caused the Catholic populace to give less attention in the last century to the teaching of the Church as set forth by I Vatican Council and the Popes of the nineteenth century. We now have the popular fad among Catholic educationists of reading Kierkegaard's notion of faith as though it were a new revelation with a message for Catholicism, little suspecting, it appears, that Gregory XVI was concerned about this problem as early as was Kierkegaard, and that he gave the answer of the Church, one that was later crystallized in I Vatican Council. Unfortunately, Gregory XVI seems to be remembered more for his personal idiosyncrasies, not included in that area proper to papal infallibility—such as his refusal to admit the use of steam engines in the Vatican territories. In doctrinal matters, however, where the Holy Spirit is ever active, Gregory XVI may have been more of a "voice crying in the wilderness. . . ." For that matter, however, Kierkegaard was such an unheard voice as well.

KIERKEGAARD'S BASIC APPROACH

In view of this, it may be worthwhile to examine what lay behind the position adopted by Kierkegaard—the presuppositions which led him to this particular concept of faith. Of chief import is the relationship he perceived between the then current defense of Christianity and the true notion of faith itself. Kierkegaard is supposedly one of the greatest opponents of "traditional" or "classical" apologetics in the Christian Church,[24] but the truth is that he never

[24] It must also be noted that the phrase "traditional" or "classical" apologetics is a very deceptive term. Apologetics is a quite recent tract within the framework of Catholic dogma, showing its first clear beginnings in the seventeenth century. Few would agree that this particular tract has even yet completed its period of formation, even though the debates and the solemn definitions of the last three centuries have established clearly and definitively a number of essential elements that must always be included in any apologetic. Central to this tract is the relationship between faith and reason, and until other questions in regard to the tract *De fide* are further clarified, there is hardly any possibility of setting forth a "final" apologetic

clearly distinguished between faith itself and those preliminary judgments which pertain to the science of apologetics, properly speaking, by which the reasonableness of the leap into faith is justified.[25]

For Kierkegaard, the predominant view of his generation was that faith resulted from historical and rational investigation. This was the "Christianity" he attacked, a Christianity that found visible expression in the Established Church of Denmark in his day, and a Christianity that was largely Hegelian in spirit. Thus it was that Kierkegaard saw the most extreme form of this error in the doctrine of Hegel who became his *bête noire*; for him, Hegel reduced everything, including faith, to some form of participation in Absolute Reason (in which Hegel felt that he had uncovered the *Ding-an-sich* that was to remain eternally hidden from Kantian eyes). This meant for Kierkegaard that faith was no longer a mystery, an encounter with God; it was simply an unfolding of reason, associated with all the pedantry so essential to the historical and scientific approach of late nineteenth century German scholarship. *Wissenschaft* ruled supreme, and attempted to subject even God's revelation to its carefully annotated laws.

Kierkegaard thus writes: "I simply cannot help laughing when I think of Hegel's conception of Christianity, it is so utterly unconceivable."[26] It had become quite common for theologians in Denmark to attempt an integration of some sort of Hegelianism and Lutheran belief. The result was a speculative interpretation of Christianity which side-stepped the reality of Christian history and spoke only in terms of the unity of Absolute Spirit and the

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tract—which is what the phrase "traditional" or "classical" apologetics seems to indicate. Any further formulation of the tract, however, must necessarily include those elements settled by the magisterium beyond dispute. Cf. Joseph Clifford Fenton, "The Case for Traditional Apologetics," *AER*, CXLI (1959), 415: "This portion of theological science can be rearranged. It can and should be improved and advanced. Substantially it can never be abandoned, unless a man is willing to abandon the teaching set forth in our chapter of the *Dei Filius*." Cf. Denz. 1781-1800.

[25] Cf. John L. Murphy, "Modern Man and God," *AER*, CXLIV (1961), 244-271.

[26] Soren Kierkegaard, *The Journals of Soren Kierkegaard*, edited and translated by Alexander Dru (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), no. 1052. [This is cited hereafter as *Journals* (Dru) with the appropriate entry number.]

Christian revelation, conceived simply as one stage in the unfolding of Spirit or Mind in history.

In the viewpoint adopted by Kierkegaard, all of these theologians had reduced faith to reason and no more; it was to this that he objected above all. Hegel had led the way and the others had followed blindly. "How often," he exclaims, "have I shown that fundamentally Hegel makes men into heathens, *into a race of animals gifted with reason.*"[27] The Hegelian approach to religion reduced everything to this level, and in so doing eliminated everything but the universal. The "individual" was cast aside in this process. Faith no longer remained a personal commitment; it was simply a rational exercise associated with the necessary unfolding of the Absolute Mind. Moreover, in Denmark this mentality had become associated with the Established Church, according to Kierkegaard, and the individual no longer believed in a personal way at all. He simply became a Christian because this was the rational way of doing things under the Established Church.

In all of this, Kierkegaard saw a betrayal of true Christianity, and quite rightly. His solution, however, verged to the opposite extreme, and excluded entirely the use of reason and philosophic concepts in the discussion of faith. This anti-rationalism of Kierkegaard is actually as extreme as the rationalism of Hegel, but in the opposite direction. Faith became in the Kierkegaardian sense a " 'leap into the absurd,' that is a choice contrary to reason, lacking any credible motive, an act of absolute confidence in Christ's grace, without any reason whatever for hope."[28] Kierkegaard does not mean that an individual believes precisely *because* the content of faith is supposedly absurd. He simply means to indicate by such a line of thought that what appears to reason alone as something absurd is perceived by the man of faith as something perfectly acceptable, even though the believer cannot, in turn, give a rational motive for believing nor justify his mode of acting in any philosophical fashion.

Thus Kierkegaard explains that the believer cannot quite understand the argument of reason, which is that of the unbeliever, who contends that what the man of faith believes is absurd: ". . . it is a matter of course that for him who believes it is not the

[27] *Ibid.*, no. 1050.
[28] Jolivet, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

absurd."[29] Kierkegaard is not concerned here with the notion of mysteries in Christianity; his problem lies at a more basic level and centers around the notion of religious assent. In the entire argument of that period of history, of course, if the assent of faith is a purely rational assent, it must eventually follow that the "mysteries" of Christian faith are somehow contained within the area of natural reason. It was this precise line of thought that led Hermes and like-minded theologians within the Catholic Church into similar errors.

FAITH AND REASON

Kierkegaard, however, went to the opposite extreme, and admitted no rational preparation for faith. His chief complaint is against those who would attempt to remove this "tension of the life of faith," in which the believer must continue to believe even though he recognizes that the non-believer looks upon his faith as absurd since it is not provable by reason. Kierkegaard insists that this tension is essential to faith and must remain; it would be a total error to attempt to "explain" faith, or "interpret faith as direct apprehension." The man of faith must simply accept the fact that "what for him is the most certain of all, an eternal happiness, is and must be absurd to others."[30]

In *The Sickness Unto Death,* Kierkegaard criticizes the clergy who would strive to achieve this impossible task. They are trying to rob faith of its unique character and reduce belief to a logical, reasoned process:

> But this is just the way Christianity is talked about . . . by believing priests. They either "defend" Christianity, or they translate it into "reasons"—if they are not at the same time dabbling in "comprehending" it speculatively. This is what is called preaching, and it is regarded in Christendom as already a big thing that such preaching is done and that some hear it.[31]

Kierkegaard strives to defend Christianity as "a Godfearing ignorance, which by ignorance defends faith against speculation, keeping watch to see that the deep gulf of qualitative distinction

[29] Kierkegaard, *Journals* (Dru), no. 1084.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] Soren Kierkegaard, *Sickness Unto Death,* translated by Walter Lowrie (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954), p. 235 (Appendix to I).

between God/and man may be firmly fixed. . . ."[32] This infinite qualitative difference can be preserved only in the paradox of faith; if this is set aside, the horrors of Hegelian religion will return so that "God/and man, still more dreadfully than ever it occurred in paganism, might in a way, *philosophice, poetice,* etc., coalesce into one . . . in the System," that is, the System of Hegel.[33]

In all of this, Kierkegaard reflects in large measure the basic teaching of the Catholic Church, which teaches that the mysteries of faith cannot be proven, demonstrated or comprehended. He is even more closely aligned to those Catholic theologians who hold that the grace of faith has a psychological, and not merely an entitative effect upon the individual believer—who say, in other words, that it is the grace of faith that makes *possible* the assent itself, as a psychological act. Man simply accepts—with the humility of faith—those truths surpassing human reason and revealed by God; and he does this solely by the grace of God, with whom the initiative in the supernatural order always rests.

In this entire discussion, however, it is important to note that Kierkegaard fails to make use of the distinction so important in present-day theological thought within the Catholic Church, that is, the distinction between faith itself and the motives of credibility by which the reasonableness of the act of faith is affirmed. As a result, there is in the position defended by Kierkegaard something of the same confusion that can be noted in the writings of Bishop Joseph Butler, although approached from the opposite pole. In both instances, there is a question of whether faith is the end result of a syllogistic type of reasoning, based on rational and historical (or exegetical) arguments. Butler approved of this, and thus reduced faith to reason; Kierkegaard rejected this notion, but in so doing rejected also any rational preparation for the "leap" into faith. Neither Kierkegaard nor Butler made a proper distinction between faith itself and these preliminary conclusions which indicate to the individual that when he does go on to believe on the authority of God revealing, he will not be acting contrary to reason, nor doing violence to his human, intellectual nature.

As we noted above, for Butler a theological "proof," based on Scripture and history and aided by human reasoning, was to be

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 230.
[33] *Ibid.*

identified with "faith." Actually, such a procedure ought never lead a man to conclude *Credo*. To say "I believe" does not mean that I have "rational proof" for what I am doing; the best approaches to the explanation of the act of faith within Catholic circles have rejected such a notion entirely. Reason and syllogistic conclusions based on historical evidence cannot become the ultimate foundation of the assent of faith. If they do, then faith rests ultimately on man and the powers of human reason rather than the authority of God revealing. The acceptance of God's authority in revealing becomes conditioned by prior "proof," deduced from reason alone, in which man finds the authority of God.

Nevertheless, there has been, both within and without the field of Catholic thought, a clear confusion of these two elements in the approach to faith, that is, the *preliminary* judgment that, from a purely human standpoint, there are indications enough to show the divine handiwork in revelation so that "to believe" would be in accordance with human reason; and the *second* element, the actual belief, rooted on the authority of God revealing and on this alone. This confusion is only now being clarified more and more, in part due to our current interest in the doctrines of such men as Butler and Kierkegaard.

It seems clear enough, however, that Kierkegaard's opposition to the tendency to reduce faith to a rational assent over-shot the mark considerably, and went so far that he would reject even what Catholic theology describes as the motives of credibility. For Kierkegaard, there is no judgment of reason preceding—in the logical, if not the temporal order—the act of faith. He adheres to this position only because he feels that to admit *any* use of human reason in the approach to faith would automatically make human reason the root of divine faith and lead to an acceptance of the Hegelian approach to religion. In the Catholic view, however, the motives of credibility are only reasoned judgments, based on various external evidence, so that the "leap into the absurd" is quite in accordance with human reason. In our opinion, those theologians who insist on a psychological effect of the grace of faith are far more in touch with the objective truth concerning the supernaturality of faith than those who do not. Yet even those who reject such an explanation of the assent of faith insist all the more on the role of reason in formulating these preliminary judgments.

For them, the judgment concerning the motives of credibility enters into the very essence of the act of faith itself, while for the others such a judgment is only a pre-requisite to the act of faith but does not enter into its essential nature. No Catholic theologian at the present time, however, would agree with the position of Kierkegaard that reason plays no role in the approach to faith.

SCIENTIFIC FAITH

Thus restoring to special prominence Tertullian's *Credo quia absurdum*, Kierkegaard gave to it his own interpretation and rejected all attempts to defend Christianity on any rational basis whatsoever, even one which would posit a qualitative difference between preliminary conclusions and the act of faith itself. For Kierkegaard, "he who defends it [Christianity] has never believed in it. If he believes, then the enthusiasm of faith . . . is not defense, no, it is attack and victory."[34]

There are other passages which indicate that what Kierkegaard actually has in mind in this discussion is the attempt to reduce faith to philosophy; but he went too far, from the Catholic point of view. When he continually speaks of the absurdity or irrationality of faith, he very clearly intends to say that it cannot be looked upon as the end result of a process of human logicizing or of historical, exegetic study of the Scriptures. But he leaves no room for a preliminary judgment concerning the fact that in so believing on God's authority alone, man knows—from rational and historical proofs leading at least to moral certitude—that he is not doing violence to his human, intellectual nature.

Thus, in his *Training in Christianity*, Kierkegaard strikes out against those who have "dethroned" Christianity, as it were, and set aside its claim to absolute, unswerving obedience to the revealed message: "Hence 'reasons' (believing on three grounds [that is, by a syllogism]) replaced obedience, for people were annoyed at obeying."[35] These religious debaters "defended Christianity; there was no talk of authority, nor was it employed, the 'Thou shalt' was never heard, for fear of arousing laughter. . . ."[36]

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 218.

[35] Soren Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity*, translated by Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), p. 222.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 225.

Unfortunately Kierkegaard lacked in his religious vision that absolute divine authority become incarnate in a living, hierarchical magisterium—the "created testimony" which is joined to the "Uncreated Testimony" of God revealing. Without such a living magisterium, Christian faith, as it has been given, could not help but lapse into the manifold vagaries which have arisen throughout the history of Protestantism. Since Christian revelation has not been given by means of a purely subjective illumination of some sort, there must be a divinely-guided magisterium which can preserve, interpret and unfold the content of revelation. Exegesis cannot do this, nor can the historical study of patristic and theological writings throughout history. There must be a divinely-guided body which can authentically impose this message in the name of God, and not simply present it as the opinion current within the Church or as the conclusion of theological research.

Schleiermacher attempted to bridge this gap by rooting religious certitude in the personal experience of the individual's contact with Christ and Christianity, but this led inevitably to pure subjectivism and a theory of philosophical or theological relativism in regard to Christian truth.[37] Hegel and others had tried to find religious certitude in the deified reason of the System; Harnack and others later in the nineteenth century attempted to find such certitude in historical research. Kierkegaard would have none of this.

On the other hand, Kierkegaard was also far enough removed from sixteenth century Lutheranism to reject the principle of *scriptura sola* as the root of religious certitude. He did grasp to some extent the importance of the principle of tradition; in addition, the beginnings of the work of higher criticism were having their affect in Protestant circles, so that the Written Word in itself could not be identified with divine revelation, as it had been in sixteenth century Protestantism.

Unfortunately the only institution that might conceivably have served as an authentic teacher of God's revelation in the life of Kierkegaard was the Established Church of Denmark—which was the precise religious body he was attacking. He seemed to be hemmed in on all sides, and it was this which eventually drove

[37] Cf. John L. Murphy, "Modernism and the Teaching of Schleiermacher," *AER*, CXLIV (1961), 377-397; CXLV (1961), 15-38.

him to his peculiar doctrine of the "Instant" in which the believer became contemporaneous with Christ.

Logically, much of what Kierkegaard was seeking is found in the Church of Rome; this is especially true of that authority which Kierkegaard deemed so necessary for faith. As Jolivet asks: "If the faith is to be 'proclaimed,' that is, announced, preserved and transmitted, taught and made certain, how is this possible save through an authority which has received from Christ Himself both its visible titles and a promise of infallibility?"[38] Kierkegaard remained a Lutheran, however, despite his partial rejection of the Established Church; and he remained far from the Catholic tradition on this one point in particular. His doctrine thus went about looking for some firm basis of authority on which he might defend his concept of faith against either the terrors of pure subjectivism or a "faith" confined to the realm of natural reason.

SCRIPTURE AND HISTORY

In a way, Kierkegaard fell back on the authority of the Apostles; this was at least the attempt he made. However, the historical gulf between the believer of the nineteenth century and the apostolic college of the first century raised grave difficulties. The fundamentalist sects could continue to look to the authority of Scripture as the Word of God itself, and an expression of apostolic authority, but the scriptural critics of that age had set about undermining scriptural authority—as understood by sixteenth century Protestantism—in a way that kept Kierkegaard from adopting the fundamentalist position as well. At the same time, the biblical critics did not please him either; they were far too scientific, scholarly and rational to fit into Kierkegaard's notion of faith. He felt, as Jolivet expresses it, that the Church of his time had in general produced "a scholar's religiosity which is a mere diversion, and propagated a professorial Christianity."[39] He goes so far in his *Journals* as to declare that "Christendom has long been in need of a hero who, in fear and trembling before God, had the courage to forbid people to read the Bible."[40] He was entirely opposed to

[38] Jolivet, *op. cit.*, p. 171. In regard to Kierkegaard's tendencies toward Catholic principles, besides Lowrie (above, note 19), cf. also Jolivet, *op. cit.*, pp. 172 ff.; Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 219; Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 82 ff.

[39] Jolivet, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

[40] Kierkegaard, *Journals* (Dru), no. 847.

the direction which scriptural studies were taking in his day. For Kierkegaard the Bible could be approached only as the Word of God, even though he could no longer approach it as did the sixteenth century Protestant.[41] But to approach Scripture as a critic or savant was to risk substituting the wrong motive for believing. Kierkegaard would insist that the Christian accepts revealed truths not because all first-rate scholars agree that this is the meaning of scriptural texts, but because God authoritatively asserts that it is so.

On the other hand, Kierkegaard also rejected the other argument for divine authority that so attracted the minds of men in the Classical era: the appeal to antiquity.[42] To claim that something is true since it has been held as such for eighteen-hundred years (much less, the first five or seven hundred years) is no argument at all for Kierkegaard:

> And verily the eighteen centuries, which have not contributed an iota to prove the truth of Christianity, have on the contrary contributed with steadily increasing power to do away with Christianity. It is by no means true, as one might consistently suppose when one acclaims the proof of the eighteen centuries, that now in the nineteenth century people are far more thoroughly convinced of the truth of Christianity than they were in the first and second generations—it is rather true (though it certainly sounds rather like a satire on the worshippers and adorers of this proof) that just in proportion as the proof supposedly has increased in congency . . . fewer and fewer persons are convinced.[43]

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[41] In regard to the sixteenth century Protestant mentality, cf. John T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 40, 142; Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1950), p. 367; John Dillenberger—Claude Welch, *Protestant Christianity* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), pp. 45 ff.; also pp. 189 ff. in regard to the Liberal approach to Scripture, and pp. 226 ff. in regard to the approach of present-day Protestant Fundamentalism.

[42] In regard to the mentality of the theologians of the Classical era, cf. Josef Rupert Geiselmann, "Das Konzil von Trient über das Verhältnis der Heiligen Schrift und der nicht geschriebenen Traditionen," in Michael Schmaus, *Die Mündliche Überlieferung* (München: Max Hueber, 1956), pp. 176, 182-187. In regard to John Driedo, whom Geiselmann mistakenly views as a forerunner of the classical spirit (pp. 176, 186), cf. John L. Murphy, *The Notion of Tradition in John Driedo* (Milwaukee: The Seraphic Press, 1959), pp. 273-280.

[43] Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity*, pp. 143-144.

At his cynical best, Kierkegaard goes on to proclaim that "now that Christianity has been *proved,* and on a prodigious scale, there is nobody, or next to nobody willing to make any sacrifice for it."[44] What has brought this about has been the attempt to do the impossible—the attempt to prove Christianity by appeals to reason and to history.

Kierkegaard attacks this especially in his *Training in Christianity,* striking out heavily against any and all such attempts:

> Let me first put another question: Is it possible to conceive of a more foolish contradiction than that of wanting to *prove* (no matter for the present purpose whether it be from history or from anything else in the wide world one wants to *prove* it) that a definite individual man is God? That an individual man is God, declares himself to be God, is indeed the "offence" κατ' ἐξοχήν. But what is the offence, the offensive thing? What is at variance with (human) reason? And such a thing as that one would attempt to prove! But to "prove" is to demonstrate something to be the rational reality it is. . . . One can "prove" only that it is at variance with reason.[45]

In an even more precise fashion, Kierkegaard sets forth some of the "supposed proofs" of which he is speaking: "The proofs which Scripture presents for Christ's divinity—His miracles, His Resurrection from the dead, His Ascension into heaven. . . ."[46] These, he insists, "have no intention of proving that all this agrees perfectly with reason. . . ."[47]

In what he says, Kierkegaard is quite right; a conclusion based on a study of Scripture as an historical document, considering the claims of Christ and the miracles worked in testimony of His claims, does not end up in faith but in a rational conclusion achieved by syllogistic reasoning. What he complains about is almost exactly the position defended so strongly (and wrongly) by Bishop Joseph Butler. At the same time, it must be admitted that Kierkegaard betrays a faulty appreciation of what theological writing and doctrinal system are properly doing in the first place, at least within the framework of the Church of Rome. To say that the miracles recorded in Scripture and known from history give an individual

[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *Ibid.,* pp. 28-29.
[46] *Ibid.,* p. 29.
[47] *Ibid.*

sufficient certitude concerning the divine handiwork in Christian revelation to go on to believe is one thing; this is the problem of the credibility of revelation—the fact that there is evidence enough to conclude that if one goes on to believe he will not be doing violence to his intellectual nature, nor be acting contrary to reason.

To come to such a conclusion, however, does not in any sense whatsoever "prove" that the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is God is something knowable and provable by reason alone. This is a truth surpassing reason and rational proof; it is a mystery in the strict sense, believed solely on the authority of God revealing. It can be known and accepted as a supernatural mystery only after the preliminary judgment concerning the motives of credibility (in logical if not temporal sequence); it is something known only in the act of faith itself.

So also in regard to the argument from history, extending over eighteen-hundred years, Kierkegaard is perfectly correct in stating that this fact proves "nothing *pro* nor *contra,* inasmuch as the certitude of faith is something infinitely higher."[48] He rejects the very basis of this argument, that is, that certitude increases regularly with each century, so that presumably "in our time, the nineteenth century, it is greater than it had ever been before, a certitude in comparison with which the first centuries seem barely to have glimpsed His divinity."[49]

On the other hand, while holding that these proofs do not prove the truth of Christianity, Kierkegaard lapses into a certain amount of Nominalism latent in his thought, and claims, in accordance with his general position, that the proofs of Scripture "prove that it [Christianity] conflicts with reason and therefore is an object of faith."[50] A Catholic would prefer to distinguish between something that is above reason or beyond reason, and something that is obviously contrary to reason; these are not identical propositions. Kierkegaard's violent anti-rationalism will permit him to grant no role to human reason in this entire question, no matter how distinct from the essential act of faith itself. For him, faith cannot be faith unless the leap involves, from a human point of view, some sort of violence to reason—an act of believing that will appear

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 30.
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 29.—In regard to his Nominalism, cf. Jolivet, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

quite in order only when the violence has been done and man has cast himself into the chasm; in the very act of believing the human being will perceive that he has acted properly, but not before.

Apart from this, Christ remains "the paradox, which history can never digest or convert into a common syllogism."[51] Therefore Kierkegaard gives this warning: "History may be a very reputable science, but it must not become so conceited as to undertake to do what the Father is to do, to array Christ in glory, costuming Him in the brilliant robes of the consequences [of the syllogism], as though that were the Second Advent."[52]

THE ROLE OF THEOLOGIANS

In an even more limited fashion, Kierkegaard speaks about miracles as proof of Christianity, not unlike the approach of Bishop Butler: "Here is a miracle, and a miracle is proof, and it is by miracles that they have wanted to *prove directly* the truth of Christianity!"[53] There can be no doubt that certain Christian thinkers, Butler certainly among them, have held this position. It is unfortunate that Kierkegaard failed to perceive that this faulty approach in individual Christian writers was not a necessary indication that this had been a common failing in Christianity for centuries, or that it was necessarily the avowed position of the churches. His attack on theological professors is accordingly quite universal:

> But behold how different is the custom in Christendom! There they have written these hugh folios which develop the proofs of the truth of Christianity. Behind these proofs and folios they feel perfectly confident and secure from every attack; for the proofs and the folios regularly conclude with the assurance, *ergo* Christ was what He said He was; by the aid of the proofs this conclusion is just as sure as that 2 and 2 make 4, and just as easy as thrusting the foot into the stocking; supported by this incontrovertible *ergo,* which makes the matter *directly* evident, the docents and the parsons strut, and the missionaries go forth to convert the heathen with the help of this *ergo.*[54]

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[51] Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity,* p. 33.
[52] *Ibid.,* p. 34.
[53] *Ibid.,* p. 98.
[54] *Ibid.*

It is admittedly unfortunate that theological manuals even among Catholics ever came to be looked upon in any sense as stepped-up philosophical manuals where the truth of Christianity is proven by a series of exegetical, historical and philosophical arguments; the living Church of Christ, however, the Catholic Church, has never taught that. Unlike the philosopher *qua* philosopher, the theologian lives out his life in the atmosphere of what are, to a large extent, predetermined conclusions. As Pius XII pointed out in his now famous statement in *Humani generis:*

> . . . Hence Our Predecessor of immortal memory, Pius IX, teaching that the most noble office of theology is to show how a doctrine defined by the Church is contained in the sources of revelation, added these words, and with very good reason: "in that sense in which it has been defined by the Church."[55]

Looked at from one point of view, the theologian is not unlike an algebra student who begins with the answers and works backwards (an early mathematical approach which may have led the present writer to theology, where he hopes to be somewhat more successful)! From a more basic point of view, the theologian lives out his life in the aura of faith. He attempts to show the various evidences for the teaching and faith of the Church as it is contained in Scripture; he strives to delineate the manner in which, under the ever-present guidance of the Holy Spirit, this teaching has been further clarified during the centuries.

Therefore, as Pius XII also pointed out, the starting point is always the solemn teaching of the magisterium, the created testimony of the authority of God revealing. Hence, "for this reason even positive theology cannot be on a par with merely historical science."[56] And the same is true of scriptural studies; while they are important for a proper understanding of how we ought to read and understand the Written Word of God, they cannot become the determinative norm of what God has revealed. It is for this reason that Pius XII objected to the tendency of some to make scriptural exegesis play that role:

[55] Pius XII, *Humani generis,* Denz. 2314; N.C.W.C. edition, par. 21.
[56] *Ibid.*

Thus they judge the doctrine of the Fathers and of the Teaching Church by the norm of Holy Scripture, interpreted by the purely human reason of exegetes, instead of explaining Holy Scripture according to the mind of the Church which Christ Our Lord has appointed guardian and interpreter of the whole deposit of divinely revealed truth.[57]

There is an importatnt distinction that must always be kept in mind. It is one thing to misunderstand the meaning of a text in Scripture, and it is quite another to teach erroneous doctrine. It is possible that the members of the Church have failed in the first regard, and that even conciliar and papal documents have quoted scriptural passages in a sense later shown to be inaccurate; but the solemn magisterium can never fail in the second regard, since its infallibility rests not on its reasons, its scriptural quotations or quotations from the Fathers, but simply on the divine promise of infallibility accorded to the authentic teachers of the Church—the Roman Pontiff and the bishops in union with him.

Thus the "thesis form" we find in theological manuals was never intended to be a philosophico-historical "proof," but simply a summary of the scriptural and historical evidences associated with the teaching of the Church. It is a convenient tool with which to sum up the past history of a precise doctrinal statement, but it is intended to be only that. It represents the bare minimum that must be possessed by any future theologian before beginning theological research or before entering the pulpit to preach or the classroom to teach. We do not look to manuals for research; as Karl Rahner has expressed it: "Schoolbooks are—Schoolbooks. Anyone who has ever tried it knows that it is by no means easy to write an orderly textbook or even only a part of one."[58] Yet they are necessary as a starting point.

Moreover, even in his speculative labors the theologian must make use of the solemn definitions issued by the Church in the past; he may not set aside even for a moment any of these teachings. Thus when he sets out now and then on a personal attempt to elucidate some other point not yet sufficiently clarified, he must

[57] *Ibid.*, Denz. 2315; N.C.W.C. edition, par. 22.

[58] Karl Rahner, *Schriften zur Theologie* (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1954), I, 10.

be guided by that which is taught clearly in solemn fashion. Moreover, his speculation is a purely tentative work. Whatever his conclusions may be, they are not binding upon the Christian until they have been taken up by the magisterium and incorporated officially into her teaching as a valid clarification of revealed truth; and when this is done, the reason for accepting them is by no means the authority of the theologian nor even the syllogistic argument or historical, scriptural conclusions he has drawn. At this point, the doctrine elaborated by the theologian leaves the realm of theological reasoning and enters into the realm of faith because of the authority of the magisterium now attached to it. It is this that makes it possible that, should the reasons originally offered by the theologian later be called into doubt, the doctrine as proposed by the magisterium remains secure; the Teaching Church speaks on its own authority as the representative of God, and is not tied to "proofs" of this nature. Thus the theologian must always serve the magisterium in this secondary, but important role. He may never, however, attempt to take its place.[59]

In other words, throughout the work of the theologian, there is no attempt to *prove* the faith by means of scriptural, historical and rational arguments. This faith he takes for granted from the start; it is something that exists, rooted on the authority of God alone. It serves the theologian as a starting place, and his guide along the way. He then attempts to arrange these truths in some systematic manner, showing the inner relationship between them and comparing them to truths known in the natural order.[60] He is following in his presentation the *ordo doctrinae* rather than the *ordo inventionis,* that is, he strives to give a systematic presentation of revealed truth once it has been clarified by the Church throughout various periods of history.[61]

[59] A good example of this is the teaching of St. Thomas on the moral necessity of revelation (II-II, q. 2, art. 4) which is obviously the source of inspiration for the pertinent decree on this matter in I Vatican Council (Denz. 1786). The Council proposes it on its own authority, however, and not simply because St. Thomas said it. As it happened, St. Thomas expressed well what the magisterium wished to propose, but the binding force of the teaching derives from the divinely-guided magisterium alone. Cf. John L. Murphy, "Modern Man and God," *AER,* CXLIV (1961), 253-265.

[60] Cf. I Vatican Council in his regard: Denz. 1796.

[61] Cf. St. Thomas, *Summa,* I Prologus (especially the phrase ". . .secundum ordinem disciplinae"); Bernard Lonergan, S.J., *Divinarum per-*

The theologian does not try to "prove" these matters either to Catholics or non-Catholics; neither does the teacher of doctrine nor the preacher. Those who are already Catholic have made this passage into the realm of faith and need no such "proofs," and those not yet Catholic can merely have the revelation of God proposed to them by the Church and by those who have received a mandate to teach in the name of the Church; the truths of faith and the Christian way of life will be accepted, if they are, only by co-operation with the inner working of God's divine grace. Thus the Church fully recognizes the fact that those who are not Catholic will never be "argued," and much less "forced" into belief; they will accept faith only by a personal response to the grace of Christ that will lead them to the leap into faith in which they will accept the truths and the way of life proposed by God through His Church on earth.

KIERKEGAARD'S UNSOLVED PROBLEM

Kierkegaard never approached this Catholic concept of faith and the relationship between reason and faith; as a result he never solved his enigma. He continued to reject the various movements that were taking form in his own day, leading to the more complete system of so-called Liberal Protestantism. He was totally unwilling to go along with that rationalistic school of thought which would look upon the "scriptural proof" worked out by exegesis as the basis for Christian faith. Not able to look to Scripture alone, and unwilling to admit an historical proof—not to mention a logical or metaphysical one—and having no infallible magisterium to which he might turn, Kierkegaard's position remains ambivalent. He insists upon a personal relationship with God, but he fears the excesses of these other approaches he sees about him. At the same time, as Jolivet points out, "he reacts towards authority and hierarchy, but without successfully ridding himself of the erroneous opinion which makes him see the Church as a screen and an obstacle between man and God."[62] The hierarchical Church he

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sonarum conceptio analogica (Romae: Universitas Gregoriana, 1957), pp. 7-51, esp. pp. 20-21; John L. Murphy, "The Development of Mariology," *AER*, CXXXVIII (1958), 89-103, esp. pp. 99, 103.

[62] Jolivet, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

rejected primarily was the Established Church in Denmark, just as it was the "Christendom" of this milieu that he attacked. He never grasped the position of the Church of Rome as the living embodiment of the authority of God who has chosen to speak and act through men; this alone would have been a fully satisfactory solution to his problem, as those who contend that Kierkegaard should logically have ended up a Catholic readily admit.

The only possible solution that offered itself to Kierkegaard, therefore, is associated with his notion of the "leap into faith." Kierkegaard hopes by his explanation to make each believer "contemporaneous with Christ," so that the divine authority will present itself immediately to the believer in this personal and intimate meeting with God. The doctrine of "contemporaneity" is, as Collins expresses it, Kierkegaard's answer to Hegelian theologians and purely rationalistic biblical scholars, and as such it has great advantages "in helping to restore a sane attitude, in the wake of theological and historical rationalism."[63]

The weakness of this solution is the opposite extreme: Kierkegaard goes on to exclude any and every rational activity in the approach to faith; he fails to analyze adequately the role of reason in establishing the reasonableness of making the act of faith itself.[64] This is sometimes spoken of as the "reasonableness of faith," but the phrase, which might easily be misunderstood, is intended to state that it is reasonable or in accordance with the dictates of human reason to plunge oneself into the realm of faith by co-operating with divine grace and thus entering into an area of truth and a way of life which surpasses the rational and the natural, and which man accepts solely on the authority of God revealing.

Kierkegaard's extreme reaction against the role of the intellect is closely associated with his notion of becoming "contemporaneous" with Christ, since this involves in his approach a *direct apprehension* of revealed truth. Man presumably does not need a reasoning process leading him to faith, nor need he concern himself with a system of doctrines; he perceives these truths intellectually when he meets Christ through faith. As Martin expresses

[63] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 227.
[64] Cf. Jolivet, *op. cit.*, pp. 55 ff.; Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-229.

it, in the mind of Kierkegaard "only the present is real to a man, and can form the medium of a real relationship. The past stands only in memory; the future stands only in expectation, only the present really exists. Therefore, if Christian revelation is to be effective . . . the believer and Christ must become contemporaneous."[65] In this way, Christ speaks directly to the individual in all ages; there is no need of the authority of the Church nor the force of scriptural or historical "proofs" nor any systematic presentation of "doctrines."

This attempt would focus our attention on the immediate experience of faith: it is the meeting of God and man. Yet Kierkegaard is faced with that grave problem which continually haunted his teaching, the problem of pure subjectivism. Having avoided the appeal to history and the historical revelation, and rejecting as well a living and supernatural magisterium through which the individual comes into this immediate and personal, existential relationship with Christ, Kierkegaard is hard pressed on all sides. He has come forth with a notion of authority, but it is difficult to understand how secure that authority is, since it constantly tends to fall back into pietism or subjectivism of some sort. Against any immanentist approach to faith, such as that proposed by Schleiermacher, he wants to insist on an objective truth revealed by God; but he has a difficult time putting man in touch with that objective Christian truth in his approach.

THE INSTANT

In his doctrine, Kierkegaard speaks of this meeting with Christ as the *Moment* or the *Instant:* a sort of synthesis of time and eternity, in which the believer becomes contemporaneous with Christ. It is an "atom of eternity," which breaks in upon man decisively in each succeeding period of time. Thus, Kierkegaard holds to a revelation that is somehow rooted in history and that has a definite content. The individual, however, will not approach this either by historical or philosophical proofs or through the activity of a divinely-guided magisterium. By entering into this Moment, the individal becomes contemporaneous with Christ Himself and His teaching; the revelation is accepted on the authority

[65] Martin, *op cit.*, p. 76.

of Christ Himself, and would, in regard to content, be the same for all.[66]

The obvious difficulty still remains: what is to be done if there should be an actual doubt concerning the true meaning of this revelation? It is more of an *a priori* assumption on the part of Kierkegaard that the content of revealed truth would be the same for each individual. If this theory does not work out in practice, Kierkegaard has no real answer; the danger of pure subjectivism remains. Granted that a man may experience Christ by entering into the Moment, unless he is certain what must be accepted and unless his belief and Christian viewpoint is identical with that of all other Christians, pure subjectivism and indifferentism will remain as the sole alternative. As Jolivet points out:

> Kierkegaard is a man defending an untenable and desperate position. Contradiction besets him on all sides, because he lived as it were divided up between the religious man and the poet, between the rationalist and the Christian, between the believer and the unbeliever, between the dialectician and the ironical critic of Christendom; he was these all at once, lacking any higher means whereby they might be reconciled and pacified. . . . The whole problem for Kierkegaard was to find a way out of subjectivity, which seemed to lead to the immanence of the self within itself, and to a reason set afire with impossible demands.[67]

Kierkegaard worked himself into this position by positing "a radical opposition between the spheres of reason (immanence) and of faith (transcendency)," and, as Jolivet goes on to conclude, "far from leading us to erect this conflict into the law of Christian life, it should rather induce us to avoid the paths which involve one in such contradictions."[68]

[66] Bultmann's distinction between "Historie" and "Geschichte" also seems to be concerned with a very similar problem. In order to avoid holding that faith is a conclusion deduced from historical premises, Bultmann appears to seek a solution by subtracting all that is earthly, historical, of this side of eternity, so that the believer might come into contact directly with that which is entirely "other," beyond history and the earthly: *geschichtlich*. Cf. Peter Lengsfeld, *Überlieferung: Tradition und Schrift in der evangelischen und katholischen Theologie der Gegenwart* (Paderborn: Verlag Bonifacius-Drückerei, 1960), pp. 236, 239, 244, 248.

[67] Jolivet, *op. cit.*, pp. 225, 226.

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 226.

THE LIVING CHRIST

An unfortunate misunderstanding at the start can lead a man far from the security he is seeking. The religious philosophy of Kierkegaard led him to this blind spot, but only because he was trying to avoid what ought to be avoided: the notion that faith is something that can be "proven" by historical and philosophical arguments. There *is* an alternative to these two extremes—that of pure rationalism and that of pure subjectivism—but the Danish theologian could not perceive it; hence the contradictions in his approach remained unsolved. The role of the living magisterium which, under the guidance of the indwelling Spirit, preserves intact the content of that faith which the believer accepts, implies a combination of the immanent and the transcendent, of the historical and the eternal, of the unchanging authority of God and the present moment of the believer, of the individual and the social. The believer does not accept faith from the Church in the sense that a purely human organization, a group of religious-minded men, sets forth a system or a doctrine to be acceped on its authority alone. Faith is and must remain an individual contact with God, but it is a contact with Him in His living Church, the Mystical Body of His Son, and in the revealed doctrine which He committed to that living Church, guaranteeing that through the action of the Holy Spirit, that doctrine would never be more nor less, nor other than what God Himself had revealed. In this way he becomes "contemporaneous" with Christ as the Catholic Church understands such a phrase.

Ultimately the believer accepts the truths of faith solely on the authority of God revealing, but he does not do so independently of the Church; the testimony of God includes that of His Church since it is God speaking through His Church. The Uncreated Testimony of God Himself, and the created testimony of His Church on earth both pertain to that divine authority which is the one and only motive of faith. They cannot be separated. The believer does not accept faith for the "reasons" the theologians, or even the Church, may give—reasons, that is, similar to those found in theological manuals. Theology is simply a reflection upon that which is already believed in the existential and intimate relationship within the Church which we call faith. The Church, in the name of God, *imposes* these beliefs upon mankind; this is the

essence of faith, and it is this which differentiates theology as a dogmatic subject from any philosophical system. Even speculative theology differs greatly from philosophy, since its starting point is also defined dogma, and its attempts at further clarification of revealed truths are guided—and restrained—from start to finish by the unchangeable truths already defined by the Church of Christ.

Similarly, doctrinal development does not mean the addition of new beliefs arrived at by a philosophical type of reasoning carried on by the unaided human intellect. It is something entirely supernatural; it is something far more profound and far more complicated than a simple process of reasoning. It is wrapped up in the mystery of the Church and her divinely-guided doctrinal life. As I Vatican Council was careful to point out:

> The doctrine of faith as revealed by God has not been presented to men as a philosophical system to be perfected by human ingenuity; it was presented as a divine trust given to the [Church] to be faithfully kept and infallibly interpreted. It also follows that any meaning of the sacred dogmas that has once been declared by holy Mother Church, must always be retained; and there must never be any deviation from that meaning on the specious grounds of a more profound understanding. "Therefore, let there be growth . . . and all possible progress in understanding, knowledge, and wisdom whether in single individuals or in the whole body, in each man as well as in the entire Church, according to the stage of their development; but only within proper limits, that is, in the same doctrine, in the same meaning, and in the same purport."[69]

Thus, through the guidance of the indwelling Spirit, the Church perceives ever more clearly the inner coherence of the doctrine it believes on the authority of God and teaches in His name; it plumbs ever more deeply the content of that faith. The first attempts toward this further clarification are made by individual theologians; this is a secondary role, and the theologian merely offers his tentative solution. Only when the Teaching Church itself accepts *as its own* such clarifications, and teaches them authoritatively, do they enter into the framework of what the believer accepts on the authority of God revealing.

[69] Denz. 1800. (Translation from *The Church Teaches* [St. Louis: Herder, 1957] no. 80.)

The theologian has his role to play, but in no case does he strive to prove that the infallible Church is right; this would have no more meaning than to strive to prove that God is right. The believer accepts these truths on God's authority alone; they cannot be proven to either the believer or the non-believer. They are simply proposed, proclaimed by the Church. Thus faith is not identified with reason or rational, historical or exegetical "proofs." Faith is totally "other," in the Kierkegaardian sense, and those who believe come to do so only through a personal and total commitment of self to God under the inspiration of divine grace.

There is a leap into faith, but reason points out the way. While reason cannot prove, establish, comprehend, it can show the reasonableness of going on to the act of believing. There is also a Moment of faith; just as the Mystical Body is the extension of Christ in time and space, so also, through entering by faith into this Body, the believer comes into immediate contact with Christ in His fullness: the Whole Christ, the Mystic Christ. In this manner, the believer escapes those phantoms that pursued the way of Kierkegaard. He knows no fear of a purely rationalistic faith on the one hand, and no fear of an unavoidable subjectivism on the other, brought about by the inability to preserve intact and interpret correctly the objective content of divine revelation.

Through His Mystical Body, Christ preserves unchanged through the ages the historical revelation, yet all the while increasing within the Church's teaching a fuller understanding of that revelation. The development of doctrine in the truly Catholic sense has been well compared to a man entering a dark room; at first he sees only the dark outline of the various objects, but as his eyes become accustomed to the light, he perceives things ever more clearly. So through the centuries, the teaching of the Church, the understanding of the Church, becomes more precise; but it is not the objective truths which change—as Modernism wrongly taught —but simply our perception of their full meaning.

At the same time, through His Mystical Body and through the internal grace proper to the individual, Christ brings each one of us into personal and intimate contact with Himself, opening our eyes ever more to the vision of faith that rests far beyond the realm of reason, but which at the same time unfolds for us the

true meaning of life and the true meaning of man in the present historical order.

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Washington, D.C.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The leading article in *The American Ecclesiastical Review* for October, 1911, contributed by Fr. D. Barry, of Ireland, is entitled "Possession in Moral Theology." The author, in treating of prescription, bases this mode of acquiring property, not merely on positive law but fundamentally on natural law. In other words, he believes that by God's law, when it is morally certain that an owner can never turn an article to account, his claim to it totally ceases. Positive law, however, determines the length of time required for a transfer of ownership. . . . Msgr. C. Constantini continues his series on the catacombs with an article on "Christian Symbology." He tells us that, since the early Roman converts to Christianity had a pagan background, it is not surprising to find in the catacombs images closely related to pagan ideals. However, the artists carefully avoided anything that might seem unbecoming or idolatrous and repugnant to Christian sentiment. . . . Writing under the title "American Materialism," Fr. J. B. Ceulemans discusses the philosophical system current in America in the course of the nineteenth century. . . . Fr. H. Pope, O.P., contributes an interesting account of "The Origin of the Clementine Bible." . . . Writing on "The Seminary and Moral Training," Fr. B. Feeney insists on the necessity of training seminarians in fraternal charity, conscientiousness, trustworthiness and prudence. He says: "The artificial, quasimonastic system of seminary life has to be modified considerably, but with great prudence, to make it merge and vanish insensibly into the future life of the mission." . . . Mr. G. Metlake has another instalment of his account of the life and activities of Bishop von Ketteler. . . . In the Studies and Conferences we find an article on the two Summer Schools then operating in our country—the Catholic Summer School of America, at Cliff Haven, N.Y., and the Summer School of the Catholic University of America, at Washington, D.C., which opened in 1911 with about 300 pupils, all of them nuns or lay women teachers. . . . There is also a letter, reprinted from the *London Tablet,* from a middle-aged priest, pleading for a mitigation of the eucharistic fast. . . . In the review of a recent book by Msgr. R. H. Benson, of England, we find one of the author's dreams of the future, "journeyings through the air at more than express speed," proposed as fantastic, as something "in the Jules Verne style."

DOCTRINE AND TACTIC IN CATHOLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS ON CHURCH AND STATE

One of the most important questions we are called upon to face and to answer in these times has to do with the pronouncements of Pope Pius IX and of Pope Leo XIII on Church and state. The problem is this: are the teachings set forth on the subject of Church and state in the writings of Pius IX and of Leo XIII assertions of Christian doctrine or merely statements of ecclesiastical policy. If they are no more than pronouncements of ecclesiastical policy, or even if they are primarily pronouncements of such policy, then, of course, they are subject to change. And if, on the other hand, they are statements of Catholic doctrine, they are and will remain valid and true.

According to a recent book, very well publicized and very well written, when the *magisterium* condemned the separation of Church and state, it acted in the line of policy or tactic.

> As the Syllabus and its explicatory documents—as well as the multitudinous writings of Leo XIII—make entirely clear, it was this thesis of the juridical omnipotence and omnicompetence of the state which was the central object of the Church's condemnation of the Jacobin development. It was because freedom of religion and separation of church and state were predicated on this thesis that the Church refused to accept them as a thesis.[1]

If this statement be accurate, then it follows that the separation of Church and state could well be proposed as an ideal good by the Church and its *magisterium* in a situation where the separation did not involve the "thesis of the omnipotence and omnicompetence of the state." The man who is convinced that the statement cited from Father Murray's book is true will certainly tend to imagine that the Sovereign Pontiffs have condemned the separation of Church and state *as a thesis* merely for practical as distinct from doctrinal reasons. He would likewise tend to imagine that there could be some situation in which the separation of Church and

[1] John Courtney Murray, S.J., in *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960), p. 68.

state could be preached *as a thesis* by the Catholic *magisterium*. But there is definitely no evidence to back up such a stand.

The claim is made that "the Syllabus and its explicatory documents—as well as the multitudinous writings of Pope Leo XIII" offer manifest support for the teaching contained in the citation from *We Hold These Truths*. The Syllabus condemns the proposition: "Ecclesia a statu statusque ab Ecclesia seiungendus est."[2] It does not give any reason whatsoever for the condemnation. Definitely there is no evidence from the Syllabus itself that "It was because freedom of religion and separation of church and state were predicated on this thesis [the thesis of the juridical omnipotence and omnicompetence of the state] that the Church refused to accept them as a thesis."[3]

Now the propositions condemned in the Syllabus were all taken from certain previous statements of Pope Pius IX. The proposition on the separation of Church and state was originally contained in the Allocution *Acerbissimum*, delivered by the Holy Father Sept. 27, 1852. This allocution had to do with the sad condition of the Church in the South American republic of New Granada, the country now known as Colombia. And the original edition of the Syllabus referred explicitly to this allocution, and to this alone, as a source of its pronouncement on Church and state.[4]

TEACHING OF PIUS IX

In the *Acerbissimum* we find not only that the claim made in *We Hold These Truths* is not upheld, but that exactly the opposite teaching is implied. In the course of his strictures against the authorities of New Granada, the Holy Father made these statements.

Omittimus autem hic commemorare novas alias leges a nonnullis e Deputatorum Consilio propositas, quae irreformabili Catholicae Ecclesiae doctrinae, eiusque sanctissimis iuribus omnino adversantur. Itaque

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[2] "The Church is to be disjoined from the state and the state from the Church." This is n. 55 among the propositions listed in the Syllabus. Cf. *Denz.*, 1755.

[3] Cf. Murray, *loc. cit.*

[4] There were thirty-two of these documents used as sources in the Syllabus. Many of the condemned propositions were listed as having been mentioned in more than one of these documents. The fifty-fifth, however, was referred only to the *Acerbissimum*.

nihil dicimus de illis conceptis decretis, quibus proponebatur, ut Ecclesia nempe a Statu seiungeretur, ut Regularium Ordinum, piorumque Legatorum bona oneri mutuum dandi omnino subiicerentur, ut omnes abrogarentur leges, quae ad Religiosarum Familiarum statum tutandum, earumque iura et officia pertinent, ut civili auctoritati tribueretur ius erigendi et circumscribendi Dioceses et Canonicorum Collegia, ut ecclesiastica iis conferretur iurisdictio, qui a Gubernio nominati fuissent.[5]

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[5] "We leave unmentioned other new laws proposed by some members of the Council of Deputies, which are completely opposed to the unchangeable doctrine of the Catholic Church and to its most sacred rights. And so we say nothing about those bills which were drawn up, according to which it was proposed that the Church should be separated from the state, that the possessions of religious orders and things bequeathed to the Church should absolutely be considered as subject to being borrowed, that all the laws which protect the status of the religious orders and which have reference to their rights and duties should be repealed, that the right of establishing and setting the limits of dioceses and of chapters of canons should be attributed to the civil authority, that ecclesiastical jurisdiction should be given to those who have been nominated by the government." The Latin text is found in *Sanctissimi Domini Nostri Pii PP. IX Epistola Encyclica data die VIII Decembris MDCCCLXIV ad Omnes Catholicos Antistites Unacum Syllabo Praecipuorum Aetatis Nostrae Errorum et Actis Pontificis ex Quibus Excerptus Est Syllabus* (Ratisbon: Pustet, 1865), pp. 76 f. It is interesting to note that the *Quanta cura,* the encyclical with which the Syllabus was associated, contains this statement: "Quae falsae ac perversae opiniones [Pope Pius IX is speaking of the errors he has condemned in previous pronouncements and particularly of those which are listed in the Syllabus] eo magis detestandae sunt, quod eo potissimum spectant, ut impediatur et amoveatur salutaris illa vis, quam Catholica Ecclesia ex divini sui Auctoris institutione et mandato libere exercere debet usque ad consummationem saeculi, non minus erga singulos homines, quam erga nationes, populos, summosque eorum principes, utque de medio tollatur mutua illa inter Sacerdotium et Imperium consiliorum societas et concordia, quae rei cum sacrae tum civili fausta semper extitit ac salutaris" (*ibid.*, p. 2). The language of the *Quanta cura* resembles that of the *Mirari vos arbitramur* of Pope Gregory XVI, the first papal document to condemn the doctrine of the separation of Church and state. The pertinent paragraph of the *Mirari vos arbitramur* reads: "Neque laetiora et Religioni et Principatui ominari possemus ex eorum votis, qui Ecclesiam a Regno separari, mutuamque Imperii cum Sacerdotio concordiam abrumpi discupiunt. Constat quippe, pertimesci ab impudentissimae libertatis amatoribus concordiam illam, quae semper rei et sacrae et civili fausta extitit ac salutaris" (*ibid.*, p. 168). It is obvious that the teaching of the *Mirari vos arbitramur* and the *Quanta cura* is completely opposed to that of *We Hold These Truths.*

The allocution goes on to complain against many other bills which had been introduced by various members of the legislature of New Granada, but which had not, at that time at least, been enacted into law. And this section of the document ends with the following observation.

Atque haec omnia omittimus, proptereaquod etiamsi hae leges ab aliquibus e Deputatorum Consilio fuere propositae, tamen plerique Deputati ac Senatores, Deo bene iuvante, eas leges reiiciendas esse decrevere, et horruerunt tot iam gravibus inflictis Ecclesiae vulneribus alia nova imponere vulnera.[6]

The only source indicated in the Syllabus for the fifty-fifth condemned proposition (the one on the separation of Church and state) is this allocution. And the section cited above is the only part of the document which mentions the separation of Church and state. And it is quite obvious that the *Acerbissimum*, like the Syllabus itself, did not condemn the doctrine according to which the separation of Church and state is a good thing in itself merely because, or even primarily because, this teaching in some way involves or is connected with the doctrine of the omnicompetence or the omnipotence of the state.

In the *Acerbissimum* the great Pius IX complained bitterly about the attacks made against the Church and its rights by the government of New Granada. In the course of this allocution, the Sovereign Pontiff spoke briefly of other measures which had been proposed to the legislature, but which had not been passed, and which thus did not have the force of law. He stated that some of these measures were "completely *(omnino)* opposed to the irreformable doctrine of the Catholic Church and to its most sacred rights." And the first among these measures was one according to which the Church was to be separated from the state.

In other words, the fact of the matter is that, in the context of the *Acerbissimum*, the condemnation of the suggestion that the Church should be separated from the state in that unhappy country

[6] "And We omit all these things because, even though these laws have been proposed by some of those who belong to the Council of Deputies, the majority of the Deputies and Senators, by God's grace, decided that these bills should be rejected, and they refused to add new wounds to the serious injuries which had been previously inflicted on the Church" (*ibid.*, p. 77).

was based, not on the assumption that such a separation would bring with it interference by the state in ecclesiastical affairs, but on the grounds that such a separation, under the circumstances, was wrong in itself, opposed completely to the unchangeable Catholic doctrine and to the Church's most sacred rights. The Church definitely did not condemn the *thesis* of the separation of Church and state as a tactical or political measure. This teaching was likewise not rejected because it was connected with some other unacceptable doctrine. And, at the end of this section, the Holy Father noted with gratitude that the legislators of New Granada were unwilling to add new wounds to the wounds already inflicted upon the Church.

The wounds that had been inflicted, as we see in the text of the allocution, were the anti-clerical and anti-Catholic laws and measures then in force in New Granada. The passing of a law according to which the Church was to be set apart from the state in this still nominally Catholic country would have been, in the mind of Pius IX, and according to the very text of the *Acerbissimum,* a new wound, a new injury inflicted upon the Church. It would have been an injury quite distinct from the other measures taken against the Church in that country.

Indeed, in the text of the *Acerbissimum,* the *thesis* of the separation of Church and state is not rejected by the Catholic *magisterium* because it was predicated on the doctrine of the omnipotence of the state. It was rejected as something undesirable in itself, as something which runs counter to the unchangeable doctrine of the Catholic Church itself.

WRITINGS OF LEO XIII

This same truth becomes quite apparent if we look into "the multitudinous writings of Leo XIII." The most striking and pertinent statement is to be found in the encyclical *Immortale Dei.*

Hac ratione constitutam civitatem, perspicuum est, omnino debere plurimis maximisque officiis, quae ipsam iungunt Deo, religione publica satisfacere.—Natura et ratio, quae iubet singulos sancte religioseque Deum colere, quod in eius potestate sumus, et quod ab eo profecti, ad eumdem reverti debemus, eadem lege adstringit civilem communitatem. Homines enim communi societate coniuncti nihilo sunt minus in Dei potestate, quam singuli: neque minorem, quam singuli, gratiam Deo

societas debet, quo auctore coaluit, cuius nutu conservatur, cuius beneficio innumerabilem bonorum, quibus affluit, copiam accepit. Quapropter sicut nemini licet sua adversus Deum officia negligere, officiumque est maximum amplecti et animo et moribus religionem, nec quam quisque maluerit, sed quam Deus iusserit, quamque certis minimeque dubitandis indiciis unam ex omnibus veram esse constiterit: eodem modo civitates non possunt, citra scelus, gerere se tamquam si Deus omnino non esset, aut curam religionis velut alienam nihilque profuturam abiicere, aut adsciscere de pluribus generibus indifferenter quod libeat: omninoque debent eum in colendo numine morem usurpare modumque, quo coli se Deus ipse demonstravit velle.[7]

This is the authoritative and unchangeable teaching of the Catholic *magisterium* on the thesis about Church and state. It bears not the slightest resemblance to the explanation offered in *We Hold These Truths*. It is not a matter of Catholic politic or of Catholic tactic, but a matter of Christian doctrine, that in itself and objectively the state or the civil society is obligated to give public and corporate worship to God, to pay to God the debt of acknowledgement due to Him because of His supreme excellence and because of our complete dependence upon Him. Under certain circumstances the payment of this debt may be impossible, but in

[7] "As a consequence, the State, constituted as it is, is clearly bound to act up to the manifold and weighty duties linking it to God, by the public profession of religion. Nature and reason, which command every individual devoutly to worship God in holiness, because we belong to Him and must return to Him since from Him we came, bind also the civil community by a like law. For men living together in society are under the power of God no less than individuals are, and society, not less than individuals, owes gratitude to God, who gave it being and maintains it, and whose ever-bounteous goodness enriches it with countless blessings. Since, then, no one is allowed to be remiss in the service due to God, and since the chief duty of all men is to cling to religion in both its teaching and practice—not such religion as they may have a preference for, but the religion which God enjoins, and which certain and most clear marks show to be the only one true religion—it is a public crime to act as though there were no God. So, too, it is a sin in the State not to have care for religion, as a something beyond its scope, or as of no practical benefit; or out of many forms of religion to adopt that one which chimes in with the fancy; for we are bound absolutely to worship God in that way which He has shown to be His will." The Latin text in the *CICF*, the *Codicis Iuris Canonici Fontes* (Vatican Press, 1933), III, 236 f. The rather free English translation is in Father Wynne's edition of *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1903), 110 f.

any event it is definitely not a good or a desirable thing to have any state withhold from God the payment of the debt of religion which is due to God.

Furthermore it is imperative that this debt be paid, not as the individual human being or as the individual community would like to pay it, but precisely and entirely in the way in which God Himself has signified clearly that He wants to be worshipped. In the final analysis, this and this alone is the reason why the Church has refused to accept the separation of Church and state as a thesis. This is the basic and the essential reason why it is the Catholic thesis that objectively every community, every state, as as well as every individual, should recognize and acknowledge the Catholic Church for what it truly is, the one and only supernatural kingdom of the living God on earth. And this information comes from the explicit statement of Pope Leo XIII.

The information contained in the *Immortale Dei* is fundamental, as far as the Catholic teaching on the *thesis* concerning the true and proper relation of Church and state is concerned. It tells us the reason why it is and must always be objectively an undesirable thing to have any individual or any community withhold from God the true worship that is due to Him according to the rite which He has shown that He wishes to have observed, that is, the rite of the Catholic religion within the one and only true Church of Jesus Christ, which is the Catholic Church. But there is another document written by Leo XIII which is just as important for the people of our day, a document which, like the *Immortale Dei,* is commonly ignored by those who seem afraid of the traditional Catholic teaching on Church and state. That document is the *Longinqua oceani spatia,* a letter issued by Pope Leo XIII on Jan. 6, 1895. The most pertinent section reads as follows:

Harum felicitati rerum non est dubium plurimum iussa ac decreta conducere Synodorum vestrarum, earum maxime quas posteriore tempore Sedis Apostolicae vocavit et sanxit auctoritas. Sed praeterea, libet enim id fateri quod est, sua debetur gratia aequitati legum, quibus America vivit, moribusque bene constitutae rei publicae. Hoc enim Ecclesiae apud vos concessum est, non repugnante temperatione civitatis, ut nullis legum praepedita vinclis, contra vim defensa iure communi iustitiaeque iudiciorum, tutam obtineat vivendi agendique sine offensione facultatem. Sed quamquam haec vera sunt, tamen error tollendus, ne quis hinc sequi existimet, petendum ab America exem-

plum optimi Ecclesiae status: aut universe licere vel expedire, rei civilis reique sacrae distractas esse dissociatasque, more americano, rationes. Quod enim incolumis apud vos res est catholica, quod prosperis etiam auctibus crescit, id omnino fecundati tribuendum, qua divinitus pollet Ecclesia, quaeque si nullus adversetur, si nulla res impedimento sit, se sponte effert atque effundit; longe tamen uberiores editura fructus, si, praeter libertatem, gratia legum fruatur patrocinioque publicae potestatis.[8]

Certainly this runs directly counter to the claim made in *We Hold These Truths.* The *Longinqua oceani spatia* has to do with the Church in the United States of America. The author of this letter was a Sovereign Pontiff who was quite well aware of the fact that, in the United States at least, separation of Church and state did not involve any omnicompetence of the state, or any domination of the Church by the state. Yet he is careful to note that "the example of the best condition of the Church is not to be sought from America." He is the same Sovereign Pontiff who wrote the *Immortale Dei,* the document in which the *magisterium* of the Catholic Church gives the real and only ultimate reason for the thesis on Church and state: that is, the teaching that objectively and apart from all individual considerations, God deserves to be worshipped by every individual and by every social unit, in-

[8] "The main factor, no doubt, in bringing things into this happy state were the ordinances and decrees of your synods, especially of those which in more recent times were convened and confirmed by the authority of the Apostolic See. But, moreover (a fact which it gives pleasure to acknowledge), thanks are due to the equity of the laws which obtain in America and to the customs of the well-ordered Republic. For the Church amongst you, unopposed by the Constitution and government of your nation, fettered by no hostile legislation, protected against violence by the common laws and the impartiality of the tribunals, is free to live and act without hindrance. Yet, though all this is true, it would be very erroneous to draw the conclusion that in America is to be sought the type of the most desirable status of the Church, or that it would be universally lawful or expedient for State and Church to be, as in America, dissevered and divorced. The fact that Catholicity with you is in good condition, nay, is even enjoying a prosperous growth, is by all means to be attributed to the fecundity with which God has endowed His Church, in virtue of which, unless men or circumstances interfere, she spontaneously expands and propagates herself; but she would bring forth more abundant fruits if, in addition to liberty, she enjoyed the favor of the laws and the patronage of the public authority" (*CICF,* III, 461 f; Wynne, *op. cit.,* 323 f).

cluding the state, according to the rite of the one true religion established and sanctioned by Himself.

A group or society is in a position to give that corporate and public tribute of acknowledgement to God only when the members who constitute this society are willing and ready to give it. Thus, in a situation in which a state is made up of citizens who profess various religions, or who adhere to none, that state is definitely not in a position to give God the worship due to Him, the worship according to the rite of the true religion, the religion of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ Our Lord. In such a position it is obvious that the best thing that can be done is to act as we act here in the United States. But the great Pope Leo XIII did not lose sight of the fact, and did not want us to lose sight of the fact, that our American separation of Church and state is predicated upon a condition which definitely is not good in itself, a situation in which a great number of those whom we love as our fellow citizens fail, for one reason or another, to give to God and to Jesus Christ the true and rightful worship really due to God. Furthermore, even considered in itself, the failure of this, the greatest of the nations of history, to thank God according to the rite of the one true religion cannot be considered as objectively anything other than undesirable.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, an examination of the statement contained in the Syllabus, of the passage in the *Acerbissimum* upon which this declaration of the Syllabus was based, and of the pertinent authoritative documents of Pope Leo XIII, make it very clear that the Church did not refuse to accept the separation of Church and state *as a thesis,* that is, as a condition which is to be described as objectively and ultimately desirable, apart from the conditions obtaining in individual states, because that separation was predicated on the Jacobin doctrine of the omnicompetence of the state. Quite on the contrary, the Church taught and continues to teach that the state should give public worship to God and to Christ according to the rite of the one true religion, and that the state should recognize the Catholic Church for what it is, the one and only supernatural kingdom of God in this world. And it teaches these truths because they form a part of the message which the

Church is empowered and obligated to preach among the children of men until the end of time.

Religion is and always will be the payment of the debt of acknowledgement and gratitude due to God by reason of His supreme excellence and of our absolute dependence upon Him. That payment, which we call worship, is due to God from every human being and from association of human beings. Furthermore that worship is due objectively to Jesus Christ Our Lord because He is a divine Person. And God wills that this worship should be given to Him according to the rite of the one and only true religion, the religion of the Catholic Church.

The Church cannot cease to preach these truths until the end of time. Certainly it would be more fashionable on the part of the Church and on the part of its members to speak and to write as if the Church, objectively, had no right to anything more than freedom from oppression on the part of the various states that go to make up the world society in which we live. Likewise it would please liberals both outside of and within the Church's membership if the *magisterium* could teach that, in these enlightened days, a truly democratic state has no objective obligation or ideal higher than that of granting true liberty to the Catholic Church and to all the other religious organizations within its borders.

It might seem to be good tactic for the Church to claim that a truly democratic state need never concern itself about the truths brought out so clearly and so forcefully in the *Immortale Dei,* and that thus the truly democratic state need never concern itself in any way or under any circumstances about any obligation to worship God according to the rite of true religion, and to acknowledge Jesus Christ Our Lord as God. But, even though this might seem to be good tactic during these difficult days, when the Church is troubled as perhaps it has never been before during the course of its history, it would be a rejection of the Church's own commission and obligation. It would be a contradiction of basic truths the Church is meant to teach and to guard until the end of time.

And it is imperative that, in these most dangerous times, the teachers of the Catholic Church should not lose sight of the fact that the Church exists in order to glorify God through the salvation and the sanctification of human souls. We who have been privileged to assist in the teaching of Catholic truth will fail most

abjectly if we, by our carelessness, or our sympathy for the liberalism of the day, in any way obscure the truth that every man and every society must be considered as objectively bound to worship God and His Son according to the rite of the true religion, which is the religion of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ.

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Answers to Questions

INTERRUPTED EXPOSITION

Question: In our parish we are planning, with the Ordinary's permission, to have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament all day long every day of the week. But on Tuesday of every week a perpetual novena in honor of the Miraculous Medal is conducted with services five times throughout the day, namely at 8:00 and 10:00 o'clock in the morning, at 12:00 noon, and at 3:00 and 5:00 in the afternoon. Would it be permissible to conclude each one of these novena services with public Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament without reposing the Blessed Sacrament until after the final service?

Answer: Although Benediction must always be given before reposition on the occasion of public exposition (S.R.C. 3713), I know of no legislation that requires reposition after every Benediction in a series. As far as I can determine, you can lawfully carry out the program you describe and have Benediction after each novena service without reposing the Blessed Sacrament until the end of the day's exposition. An objection might be raised against the frequency of the Benedictions but the framework of the quintuple novena would seem to make the frequency reasonable enough. I base my answer first on S.R.C. 3438 which tells us that the Ordinary may permit Benediction to be given several times *(pluries)* on one and the same day in the same church; but more particularly do I offer S.R.C. 3448 as authority for the given program. In this latter decree, the *dubium* is presented: "Whether it is permissible for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament to be given several times in the same church and on the same day on the occasion of the assembly of pious Societies or for devotion: likewise whether it is permissible to interrupt exposition of the Blessed Sacrament to give Benediction for reasons indicated?" The answer was given: "To the first and second part: in accordance with the prudent judgment of the Ordinary; avoiding however too great a frequency, and provided there is no question of the Forty Hours' exposition." Lest the number of Benedictions in your

program be raised to six, it would be well, on the novena day, to terminate the daily exposition with the Benediction at the fifth and final novena service.

DOXOLOGIES

Question: My ordo tells me to read proper doxologies in the Office of feasts of the Blessed Virgin and on those other feasts which before the new code of rubrics carried proper doxologies. Just what are we to do about doxologies now? I thought there had been a change.

Answer: Because of the late date at which the directions of the *Rubricarum instructum* became known, editors of ordos were obviously caught with their work already done for 1961. In the process of adjusting their work to the new code they understandably let some of the old instructions slip into the revisions. The direction you mention would be such a slip. The new code, # 188, says: "Each hymn is always said with the conclusion assigned it in the Breviary. There is no change of ending by reason of the feast or a season." This means, therefore, that when you are reading the hymn for Matins or Lauds in the Saturday Office of the Blessed Virgin, you will read "Iesu tibi sit gloria, etc.," as you find it in the text before you: but, when you are reading the hymns for Little Hours, you will read the doxology as it is given in the psalter section ("Deo patri sit gloria, etc." for Prime; "Praesta, Pater piissime, etc." for Terce, Sext, and None).

COMMEMORATIONS IN VOTIVE MASSES

Question: What commemorations may or must be made in votive Masses in view of the new rubrics? I realize that the old rule of uneven orations has been abrogated but I am not clear on the present usage.

Answer: Votive Masses of the *first* class exclude all non-privileged commemorations, and an *oratio imperata.* You would therefore commemorate only (1) an occurring Sunday; (2) a liturgical day of the first class; (3) a day within the octave of Christmas; (4) a September Ember Day; (5) a feria of Advent,

Lent, or Passiontide; (6) the greater Litanies. Votive Masses of the *second* class admit only one commemoration and exclude an *oratio imperata.* The Mass for Bride and Bridegroom is in this category. Votive Masses of the *third* class admit two commemorations, or one commemoration and an *oratio imperata.* In votive Masses of the *fourth* class two other collects *may* be said. If there is a commemoration of a saint on the day of the Mass (e.g. St. Blaise on Feb. 3), that commemoration may be used; an *oratio imperata* would be said; but, in accordance with a very recent change made by the Holy See, the ferial collect, normally the collect of the preceding Sunday, is not to be said ("a feria of the fourth class is never commemorated either in a festive Mass or a votive Mass, even if it is the conventual Mass").

PSALMS AT PRIME

Question: On feasts of the second class, when they fall on Sunday (e.g. the Transfiguration, this year) which psalm do we read first at Prime, *Gratias agite* or *Deus, in nomine tuo?* The ordo tells us merely to take the antiphons and psalms from the Sunday psalter.

Answer: On feasts of the second class which fall on Sunday we read the *Gratias agite* (Ps. 117) at Prime. Psalm 53 is now limited to feasts of the first class.

JOHN P. MCCORMICK, S.S.

REENACTMENT OF THE PASCHAL SUPPER

Question: What is to be said of the growing custom in religious communities and rectories, as well as in the homes of lay Catholics, of celebrating a paschal meal on Holy Thursday evening according to the ancient Jewish rite as regards both prayer and food?

Answer: As long as such a ceremony is recognized as merely a memorial of the past, and not as an approved act of Catholic worship, there would be nothing wrong in conducting it. It recalls vividly the meal in which Christ and His disciples took part the night before His death. There should not, however, be any repeti-

tion of the institution of the Holy Eucharist, since some might get the impression that the consecration of the bread and wine actually takes place. I do not myself recommend this ceremony, because the laity are likely to look on it as a true religious function. Moreover, some will doubtless invite their Jewish friends, to prove how "liberal" Catholics can become by imitating Jewish ceremonies. I must admit that I heard of this practice for the first time when I received this question.

WHO SHOULD SAY THE MASS?

Question: A community of religious priests have charge of a large parish. Every day there are many scheduled Masses, including an evening Mass at half past five. All the priests have the faculty to binate, even on weekdays, in order to provide for all the scheduled Masses, if no other priest is available. Usually, however, this is not necessary on weekdays. One day the priest assigned to the evening Mass inadvertently broke his fast by taking some solid food at about four. Each of the other priests had said one Mass that morning, but all were fasting, as far as the evening Mass was concerned. The questions arose: "Should the evening Mass be said? And if so, by whom—by the priest who had broken his fast, but had not yet offered the Holy Sacrifice and did not wish to be deprived of this privilege, or by one of the other priests who had already said one Mass?" What is the answer to these questions?

Answer: I believe that all theologians would agree that the evening Mass should be said. It would be a source of scandal if the faithful accustomed to attend that Mass were turned away and told there would be no Mass that day. Now the obligation to avoid scandal, based on divine law, takes precedence over ecclesiastical legislation. If the priests of the community did not have the right to binate and another priest who had not said Mass that day was not available, I believe that the non-fasting priest should say the Mass on the score that the prohibition to binate is graver than the prohibition to say Mass after one has broken his fast. However, the fact that all the priests are entitled to say the Masses, when no other priest is available, changes the picture.

In reply to the second question I believe that one of the priests who had already said Mass should offer the evening Mass even

though the priest assigned to this Mass would thereby have to forego the great privilege of offering the Holy Sacrifice that day. For, in this solution, everything is within the sphere of the priest celebrant's lawful rights, and there is no need to have recourse to epicheia, or to the conflict of laws. The priest has the faculty to binate when no other priest is available; and in the circumstances described it is quite true to say that the priest who has broken his fast is not available.

A CHILD'S ACT OF CONTRITION

Question: Is the following formula of the Act of Contrition, found in some catechisms for children, satisfactory: "O my God, I am sorry for all my sins because they displease Thee who art all good and deserving of all my love. With Thy help I shall sin no more"?

Answer: Certainly this formula is quite satisfactory for a child who has perfect contrition. But what of the child who has only imperfect contrition? There appears to be no expression of this type of sorrow in the formula, and yet imperfect contrition is fully adequate for a good confession, and doubtless many persons, adults and children, have only this type of contrition when they go to confession. I suggest that a phrase be added to express imperfect contrition—for example, "and also because of Thy just punishments," after "love." Indeed, I question the wisdom of having a special act of contrition for children. I believe that even the youngest children should be taught the standard act of contrition which they can use all their lives. Such was surely the custom a few decades ago. The Act of Contrition found in the Baltimore Catechism does not exceed the memory or the intelligence of the average child of seven years.

COMPANY-KEEPING BY THE MARRIED

Question: What should be the rules concerning company-keeping (with a view to marriage) by a person whose previous marriage is certainly invalid or doubtfully valid and who is expecting to receive a declaration of nullity from the ecclesiastical court, or by one who is certainly married validly but hopes for a dissolution

of the bond? I am thinking especially of (1) a Catholic whose previous marriage was undoubtedly invalid because of lack of form but who has not as yet received a declaration of nullity from the Church, (2) a person who has good reason to believe that his marriage was invalid because of unjust coercion, a diriment impediment or defective consent, the case being still pending, (3) a person seeking the dissolution of a previous valid natural bond by way of the Pauline Privilege or by way of the privilege *in favorem fidei.*

Answer: In the first place we must premise that before a person involved in a previous union can keep company with a view to another marriage, he must be definitely and permanently separated from his previous partner. For a person still living a conjugal life to court a third party would be gravely scandalous, to say the least, even though marriage is certainly null and void. Secondly (apart from extraordinary circumstances) there must have been a civil divorce from the first spouse. It is true, as far as the laws of God and of the Church are concerned, a civil divorce is not *per se* needed in a case subject to the Church's authority; but *per accidens* it is needed in order to avoid legal difficulties which might otherwise arise both for the priest and for the parties in the event of another marriage with only ecclesiastical permission.

Presupposing these conditions, I believe that the general principle to be used in solving our correspondent's problem should be that company-keeping by a Catholic or by a catechumen who had entered into a previous conjugal union, the other party of which is still living, is morally permissible only when ecclesiastical authority has officially declared the person free to contract another marriage. For it is a general principle that a marriage is to be regarded as valid until the opposite is proved; and a Catholic or a catechumen obtains such proof from ecclesiastical authority. To answer our correspondent's particular problems: (1) Even when the case concerns a Catholic who has attempted a marriage outside the Church, which was certainly never rectified, an official declaration of nullity is required before company-keeping would be permissible. (2) Still more must this be maintained when the alleged grounds are coercion, a diriment impediment or defect of consent. In such cases it is by no means certain that freedom to marry will be granted, and at any rate there may be a long delay before a favorable

decision will be handed down. (3) When the dissolution of the marriage bond *in favorem fidei* is being sought, no company-keeping can be permitted until the favorable decision has been granted. It is somewhat different in the case of the Pauline Privilege. When this is employed, the previous marriage bond is broken only by the new marriage (Can. 1126), so that courtship by a married person is permissible in this case. However, I do not believe that this should be allowed until the interpellations have been made (or dispensed with) and there is good assurance that the Church will permit the second marriage.

Finally, it is well to remind priests to be strict in laying down these rules. Some priests are inclined to be easy-going in this matter, especially when the way to a valid second marriage seems certain. On the other hand, there can be occasions when a priest can permit a person to continue a courtship begun in good faith when it seems certain that his freedom to marry again will soon be established—for example, the case of a Catholic who contracted a civil marriage, since broken by divorce, which will undoubtedly soon be declared null and void by the ecclesiastical tribunal. This is a matter of pastoral prudence, based on the principle that it is sometimes the better course to allow a person to remain in good faith in respect to a practice that *per se* is wrong.

FRANCIS J. CONNELL, C.SS.R.

Book Reviews

THE LINEN BANDS. By Raymond Roseliep. Preface by John Logan. Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1961. Pp. xvii + 63. $3.50.

Our American poets have come upon a broadly workable style, derived from many sources and capable of a variety of applications. One application made by younger poets is to distill, through greater expertness, subtlety, and control, the meaning of influences within their own lives. Among these young poets, Raymond Roseliep has succeeded admirably.

In his first book, *The Linen Bands,* Father Roseliep is an artist as agile as life; he flexes the most varied techniques with ease in such visions mingled in life as a mother's birthday, a friend's ineptness, and a ragman's charm. The mood of his poetry is a creative naturalness, with its easy turn of phrase and precisely structured simplicity. But the best characterization of Father Roseliep's poetry is in his own words from another context: "agility obeys my song" (Song of Dust").

The subject matter in this collection cannot be parceled into nicely labeled packets, not readily at least. The range of the poems is wide, a heartening reminder that the stuff of poetry is frequently crude and constantly available.

Even so, he does have a singular view of life—this priest-poet-teacher. Father Roseliep therefore does offer the reader many visions of his students who, too young to savor Shakespeare, are not too young to bear the scars of war and parted friendship and sin. Contact with youths accounts for much of the enthusiasm in this artist of many influences; to the poet "they show—no, give—a soul"; to the teacher these youths equally show and give an honesty for which they "will last/the longest as acquaintances, and far beyond the reach of bird or star"; and to the priest a youth is a

> Replica of Christ. And growing to the likeness
> more and more by aid of my absolving hand.

Here is a poet who can sing in American speech patterns (a sure indication of his mastery with our language). Into these rhythms—almost elusive—he blends slant rhyme, achieving splendid effects in antithesis and heightened tension. His precision is taut but always two full degrees below brittleness. These techniques raise his poems obliquely

to the sublime, as in "The Yellow Christ," and many poems on friendship (surely one of his best themes). Perhaps Father Roseliep's best dexterity, and pathos, is found when he bends language back upon itself, showing the weakness of idiom in friendship by "To Jim/On Going to the Wars."

Attention must be called to this poet's *humor*—I know no more apt word. His readers in American, Canadian, and British periodicals have come to expect this balanced, refreshing lightness from Raymond Roseliep. His is that gentler sort of humor which humility sees in human shortcomings, and found here with a reverence in "No Laughing Matter," with punmanship in "Portrait of a Philosopher," and with engaging warmth in "To a Young Lady, Age Four, Who Asked to Marry Me."

A priest and teacher did indeed write *The Linen Bands* but this is poetry. John Logan closes his quotable Preface saying Father Roseliep "is a poet . . . for whose future we will keep vigil." There is candor and enthusiasm here, as well as an irresistible hope: all awaiting our vision every bit as much as we await its artist's future.

PATRICK KEATING, O.P.

DE CONCILIIS OECUMENICIS: THESES CAROLI PASSAGLIA DE CONCILIIS DEQUE HABITU QUO AD ROMANOS PONTIFICES REFERUNTUR. Ad fidem manuscripti primo edidit introductione generali necnon multiplicibus notis illustravit Heribertus Schauf. Rome: Herder, 1961. Pp. 178. No price given.

Passaglia's theses and the demonstrationes attached to each of them take up less than twenty pages of this definitely worth-while book. There are eleven of these theses, and they are up to the high standards of most of Passaglia's work. The real value of the volume, however, is to be found in the notes, drawn up by Father Schauf. They give a great deal of information on the dogmatic theology of the councils not generally available in our modern manuals of ecclesiology. Thus, despite the fact that the theses seem to be those of Passaglia's course at the Gregorian in 1856, this book will be of great service to the theological scholar of 1961.

JOSEPH CLIFFORD FENTON

HANDBOOK FOR THE NEW RUBRICS. By Frederick R. McManus. Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1960. Pp. 203. $4.50.

This is the book countless priests and religious have been anxiously awaiting. It is a practical guide to the new code of general rubrics

for Holy Mass and the divine Office. It is not a running commentary; nor does it enter into disputed points. As the author says in his Foreword: "It is much too soon after the appearance of the code for such an effort. The need of the moment is for a basic explanation of the nature and worth of the new rubrics." This *Handbook for The New Rubrics* admirably answers that need.

The introductory chapter, dealing with the new code in general, treats a variety of pertinent points: the background of the new code; its relation to former rubrics, customs, indults and privileges; the scope and limitations of the code. The remaining chapters of the book are grouped into three parts.

Following the outline of the new code, the first part treats of the Liturgical Year. The author does not limit himself, fortunately, to an explanation of the changes brought about by the new code. He also provides the reader with a brief explanation of the meaning and purpose of the Year of the Lord. What appears as a downgrading of the feasts of the saints in the new calendar is also explained. As the author notes, "The real purpose is to lay deeper stress on the heart of the liturgical celebration, upon the Sunday and the feasts and seasons of the Lord's mysteries."

The divine Office is covered in the second part. The opening chapter of this section contains a summary of the changes relative to the divine Office. This feature should prove most useful. His treatment of the problem of private anticipation of Lauds is now superfluous. The Holy See has since clarified this *dubium*. Nevertheless, it is reassuring to know that the opinion expressed by the author is in complete accordance with the decision of the Holy See—Lauds may not be anticipated when said by an individual.

The final part of the book deals with Holy Mass. Again, the author presents a useful summary of the changes and then proceeds to specifics. To his credit, Father McManus is not content with merely citing the law. He has faced the practical problems occasioned by the new law and makes an attempt to offer some solutions. For example, according to the new regulations for solemn Masses, the celebrant no longer reads the texts from the missal. But the new rubrics give no further directions to the celebrant. He suggests that the celebrant should go to his place at the bench, listen to the reading of the epistle, and remain at the bench through the gospel (and sermon, if someone other than the celebrant preaches). He bases his solution on the nature of the Mass, general ceremonial principles, and similar cases. His reasons are sound and certainly in accordance with ancient practices. For many centuries, the fore-Mass was an independent entity. Activity at

the altar did not commence until the offertory. However, it is not likely that this solution will become widely accepted, at least not for awhile.

The chapter on Holy Communion is specially recommended. Once again, the author proves he is alert to the problems connected with modern parochial liturgy and offers some solutions. Priests who are anxious to have Communion distributed and received with proper reverence (and all of us should be), but are faced with the practical difficulties occasioned by the increased number of communicants, crowded churches, and a full schedule of Masses will find this chapter rewarding. The author has even gone to the trouble of working out a schedule of Masses, for, as he says, "It is in fact far better to provide more time for Mass than to seek abreviations." When reading this excellent chapter, it should be kept in mind that his suggestions go far beyond the immediate problem of distributing Holy Communion. In the author's own words: "They are directed toward a holier celebration of Mass and a more fitting observance of Sundays and feast days of obligation."

Reading Father McManus' works is always pleasurable and rewarding, and this is no exception. He is to be commended for producing so fine a book so soon after the issuance of the new code. Only one well acquainted with the law and liturgy could accomplish such a task.

Richard J. Murphy, O.M.I.

Books Received

ROBERT BELLARMINE, SAINT AND SCHOLAR. By James Broderick, S.J. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1961. Pp. x + 430. $5.75.

THE TEMPORAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE RELIGIOUS HOUSE OF A NON-EXEMPT, CLERICAL, PONTIFICAL INSTITUTE. By Francis L. Demers, O.M.I. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1961. Pp. xi + 147. $3.00.

MARIA. ÉTUDES SUR LA SAINTE VIERGE. Tome VI. By D'Hubert Du Manoir, S.J. Paris: Beauchesne et Ses Fils, 1961. Pp. 867. No price given.

GOD SPEAKS TO MEN. UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE. By Thomas Barrosse, C.S.C. Notre Dame, Ind.: Fides Publishers, 1961. Pp. 77. 75¢.

THE YEAR MADE HOLY. By Matthias Premm. Translated by Colman J. O'Donovan. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1961. Pp. viii+ 180. $3.50.

GOD'S LIVING WORD. By Alexander Jones. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1961. Pp. ix + 214. $3.95.

THE BLESSED TRINITY AND THE SACRAMENTS. By Taymans d'Eypernon, S.J. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1961. Pp. 150. $3.50.

KING AND CHURCH. THE RISE AND FALL OF THE PATRONATO REAL. by W. Eugene Shiels, S.J. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961. Pp. xiii + 399. $6.00.

TEACHING ALL NATIONS. Edited by Johannes Hofinger, S.J. English version revised and translated by Clifford Howell, S.J. New York: Herder and Herder, 1961. Pp. xvi + 421. $6.95.

CARMELUS. By Irenaeus Rosier, O. Carm. Rome: Institutum Carmelitanum, 1961. Pp. 345. No price given.

POLSKA BIBLIOGRAFIA PRAWA KANONICZNEGO, Tom. I. By O. Bar, O. Zmarz, O.F.M. Conv. Lublin, 1960. Pp. 284. No price given.

LEO XIII AND THE MODERN WORLD. By Edward Gargan. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1961. Pp. 246. $4.50.

TRAGEDIA BISERICII ROMÂNE UNITE DIN ROMÂNIA. By Victor Crisan. Jamez Springs, New Mexico, 1961. Pp. 76. $1.00.

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